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Dissolution of the First Marriage: Divorce in Hungary and among Hungarian Speaking People Living in Transylvania

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Abstract: The aim of this research was to compare partnership stability – particularly the stability of first marriage - between Hungary and Hungarian speaking people living in Transylvania being the Western region of Romania. The data come from two surveys: first we utilized the second wave of Hungarian panel survey titled "Turning Points of the Life Course" carried out in 2004/2005; secondly we used the same questionnaire as applied in Transylvania in 2006. There are statistically significant differences between the proportion of dissolved marriages in the two samples: it was 18% in Hungary and 7% in Transylvania. The risk of divorce was analysed by event history analysis. In Hungary and also in Transylvania the risk of divorce is affected by the number of common children and religiosity: marriages without child(ren) and where the couple is not religious are more often broken up, than those having one or more children and/or being religious. The negative effect of parental divorce, marriage in very young ages and cohabitation before the marriage was found only in Hungary only, while the calendar period-effect was experienced in Transylvania only. In Transylvania the Hungarian-Romanian marriages were much less stable than marriages in other ethnic composition.

Keywords: first marriage, divorce, event history analysis, Hungary, Transylvania

1. Introduction

There have been fundamental changes in formation and dissolution of partnerships in Hungary in recent decades: cohabitations emerging in the end of the 1970s have become more and more popular, and today the great majority of the first co-residential partnerships are cohabitations. The incidence of marriage declines, and at the same time the divorce rate increases or rather stagnates; and cohabitations are even less stable than marriages. In this paper I examine the similarity - or I can speak also dissimilarity - between Hungary and Transylvania (more precisely: Hungarian speaking people living in Transylvania, Romania) concerning the dissolution of partnerships and factors affecting it.

By investigating the stability of partnerships I primarily deal with first marriages.[1] There are two main reasons of my choice: on the one hand, respondents have been married at least once during their life and there are very few respondents married twice; on the other hand, to analyse the stability of cohabitations is more difficult because the definition of cohabitation depends on the respondents as well, and sometimes the respondents do not admit that they live in cohabitation. From this perspective the Transylvanian society can be regarded to be more conservative than the Hungarian society.

In this paper first I study some characteristics of partnerships in Hungary and the Hungarian speaking population in Transylvania[2], then I analyse some factors contributing to the break up of the first marriage. In the following part I touch on some important features of the dissolved marriages, and finally, I dedicate a short chapter to the living conditions of divorced[3] people.

I use the data from the second wave of the Hungarian "Turning Points of the Life Course" panel survey[4] (2004/2005), and the first wave in Transylvania (2006). I analyse 1960-1984 birth cohorts, 6,193 respondents in Hungary and 2,329 respondents in Transylvania.

2. Partnerships in Hungary and in Hungarian speaking population in Transylvania

Two conspicuous differences can be detected between the Hungarian and Transylvanian population regarding the composition of population by marital status. In Hungary the proportion of never-married people exceeds 40%, whereas in Transylvania this proportion is much less, it equals to one third. The other difference is the proportion of divorced people in the population: this proportion is more than two times higher in Hungary than the rate of 3.7% found in Transylvania (Table 1).

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[1] The first marriage is the first marriage of the respondent here, but it is not necessarily the first one of his/her spouse. Considering the incidence of second marriages, the number of latter cases are very small in our sample.

[2] Our Transylvanian sample consists of Hungarian speaking people living in Transylvania. When we use the expressions as "people in Transylvania", "Transylvania", "Hungarian people in Transylvania" we refer to our sample and use these expressions in the same sense as " Hungarian speaking people living in Transylvania".

[3] "Divorced" refers here to the legal marital status.

[4] Further details of the Hungarian survey can be found here: www.dpa.demografia.hu and Spéder 2002, Kapitány 2003.

The great majority of ever-married persons got married once in their life (94% in both populations), the rate of two times married person is 6-7%; and there are only very few people with more than two marriages.

The average age at the first marriage is 22.9 years in Transylvania and it is almost the same in Hungary: 22.8 years. I cannot find any difference in average age at first marriage, neither in the whole populations, nor by comparing the same birth cohorts to each other; and there is no substantial difference in the number of marriages among married people either.

Table 1. Marital status at the time of the interview, Hungary and Transylvania 2005–2006

Marital status	*Hungary*		*Transylvania*	
	cases	*%*	*cases*	*%*
Never-married	2,706	43.7	784	33.6
Married, living together	2,821	45.6	1,401	60.1
Married, living separately	102	1.7	28	1.2
Widowed	50	0.8	30	1.3
Divorced	512	8.3	86	3.7
Together	6,192	100.0	2,329	100.0

The difference found in composition of population by marital status is the result of the fact that less people get married and more people get divorced in Hungary than in Transylvania. It means not necessarily that less people live in co-residential partnership in Hungary, because cohabitations are more widespread in Hungary. Furthermore, these cohabitations compensate higher proportion of married people in Transylvania. In Transylvania 66% of the respondents got married at least once in their life, while this rate was 56% in Hungary. At the same time, 28% of Transylvanian people has lived already in cohabitation, while this proportion was 39% in Hungary.

3. Dissolution of the first marriage

Hereafter I analyse not the whole sample but only the people who have got married at least once. I investigate what kind of factors had an effect on breaking up the first marriage.

In Hungary this sample consists of 3,506 persons[5], who entered into their first marriage, and 614 of them broke up[6] by the time of the interview. In the Transylvanian sample there were 1,645 persons who got married at least once, and 135 of them divorced. In the Hungarian sample 17.5% of the respondents divorced and 8% in Transylvania, respectively. It means that divorce was two times more frequent in Hungary than in Transylvania during the period in question.

3.1. Factors affecting marriage dissolution

Several socio-demographic and economic factors can influence the breaking up of marriages. In this paper I take into account divorce of the respondent's parents, cohabitation prior to marriage, age at getting married, duration of marriage, number of common children, calendar period, education level, religiosity and, in case of Transylvanian respondents, nationality of both spouses.

Family background is a factor playing role in dissolution of marriages, especially when the respondent grew up in intact family. Persons with divorced parents are more prone to break up their own marriage. Behind this observation is an assumption that parents' divorce makes an effect on the children's marriage through socialization process: these individuals ("children of divorce") are less able to cope with their problems, do not learn the appropriate gender roles because of imperfect socialization in childhood, they experience the lack of parental control, and financial problems make their life more difficult as well (Amato 1996, de Graaf and Kalmijn 2006, Raschke 1988).

Cohabitation prior to marriage can play an important role in later outcome of marriage. This role can be both positive or negative. Cohabitation before marriage can decrease the divorce risk, because in this case the partners have the possibility of getting to know each other better, and they learn how to handle the problems emerging while living together. It is reasonable to assume that a person will get married to that partner, who seems to be suitable to live together with for longer time. At the same time premarital cohabitation can increase the divorce risk as well – in this case we can argue that people living together before the marriage hold more liberal views about marriage and generally about the partnerships, and this is why they dissolve their marriage when they face some problems. Previous

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[5] The data are unweighted for Hungary and Transylvania as well – these data are used to analyze the dissolution of the first marriage, by applying the method of event history analysis. We use weighted data in the other part of this study.

[6] Dissolution of marriage here refers to the legal divorce. Couples generally separate before the end of legal divorce procedure, that is their common life is ended at the time of separation. It would have been possible to consider the separation as the end of the marriage, but there was no available information about separation in case of the first marriage.

research supports mostly the second argument (for example White 1987, Booth and Johnson 1988, Thornton 1991).

Age at marriage is an important predictor of later divorce. In case of marriages contracted in early age people can not devote enough time to find the appropriate spouse, or rather they are not mature enough to find him/her. At very young age there are lack of emotional, economic and educational resources which are necessary to a successful marriage. During the marriage the personality of spouses changes a lot - just as a consequence of the very young age -, and this change can lead to increasing frequency of occurrence of conflicts. As a result of the effects of all these factors marriages contracted in very young age will break up with higher chance than marriages contracted in older ages (Andersson 1997, Kiernan 1986, Kravdal 1988, Martin and Bumpass 1989).

According to the research studying the common children's effect on stability of marriage, birth of children makes the relationship of the couple more stronger, and it reduces the risk of dissolution. Economic theories argue that common children are a kind of "capital", consequently they increase the value of marriage, and at the same time they increase the costs of divorce (Becker, Landes and Michael 1977, Waite and Lillard 1991, Brüderl and Kalter 2001). Taking only the number of children into consideration, it is reasonable to assume that the more common children are born in the marriage, the lower the risk of divorce. However, the effect of children's number on probability of divorce can be illustrated by an U-shape curve: it is the lowest for couples with two children, the highest for couples without child, and it is higher again among couples with three or more children (Hoem and Hoem 1992, Andersson 1997, Liu 2002). A possible explanation of this phenomenon is that the birth of third or more children can partly be motivated by other factors than the birth of the first or second child (for example, they can be non-planned children, or the couples can expect to improve their marriage by additional childbirth).

A number of factors can have an effect on relationship between the duration of marriage and risk of divorce. During the time spent together in a marriage the couple can learn to adapt to each other, they can develop suitable strategy to solve their conflicts, in this way the chance of marriage dissolution can be reduced. Difficulties in adaptation and stressful life events (as entering into the labour market, birth of the first child) experienced in the beginning of the marriage can increase willingness to divorce. Furthermore, the age and other factors can also play role in the stability of marriage. Therefore, the results of research vary depending on the considered factors, the type of data and the method of analysis: some researchers found an U-shape curve (Booth et al. 1986), others found that the divorce risk was the highest in the first some years of marriage

(VanLaningham et al. 2001), some of them thought that there was a solid rise in divorce risk during the marriage (Glenn 1998).

Former research revealed that the effect of demographic factors on divorce is fairly strong and unequivocal, while the effect of socio-economic factors shows differences in different countries.

Prevalence of divorce – beside numerous other factors – is influenced by the socio-economic environment, socio-cultural acceptance of divorce and also the legal regulation in the questionable period. Willingness to get married or divorced can be stimulated or moderated by economic change: economic growth can make inclination of divorce higher by facilitating economically independent living of the lone-parent households; and recession can result an opposite effect. Change in attitudes regarding divorce can only be detected taking into account a longer period, because change of values and attitudes is a very slow process. The legal regulation generally follows the tendencies formed earlier, so it rarely offers an explanation for long-term processes, but it can result such change in short-term, which cannot be explained by other factors.

Relation between education level and divorce can be approached in various ways too. Higher educated individuals usually have better financial opportunities, therefore unlike the less affluent people, they can afford to live in a separate household after divorce. At the same time, the factors determining higher education have positive impact on stability of marriage as well (Raschke 1988). Furthermore, economic theories also support this latter statement: the great amount of capital accumulated during the marriage makes disruption of marriage more difficult for higher educated persons (Becker 1981).

Religiosity decreases the likelihood of dissolution of marriage, because religious people believe that marriage is a lifelong relationship – this is why relation between religiosity and divorce was also examined.

Nationality of the spouse can also matter in stability of marriages in Transylvania. Different national-cultural background of spouses can raise the frequency of conflicts, so it can contribute to breaking up the marriage.

3.2. Divorce from the first marriage – an event history analysis

Factors affecting divorce were investigated by event history analysis. In this paper the dependent variable is legal divorce. The risk period starts from the beginning of the marriage and ends at the time of divorce, measured in months. Observations are censored in two cases: at the time of the interview if the event (divorce) has not occurred, or at the time of death of the spouse if this was the reason of terminating the marriage. 3,424 cases were analysed in Hungary (there were 597 divorces, 17% of the cases), respectively 1,197 in Transylvania (there were 84 divorces, 7% of the cases) – after dropping the cases where some values of variables used in analysis were missing.

Piecewise constant event history model was applied, that is it was supposed that hazard rate was constant for each categories of risk period as categorical variable, but it could be different for different categories. Results are shown as relative risks.

In the course of analysis time-constant and time-varying covariates were used as well. The time-varying covariates are duration of marriage, number of common children and period of divorce. The distribution of each covariates are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

Table 2. Distribution of covariates used in event history analysis in Hungary and Transylvania among persons getting their first marriage. Time-constant covariates

	Hungary		*Transylvania*	
	cases	*%*	*cases*	*%*
Intact family in childhood				
No	412	12.0	42	3.5
Yes	3,012	88.0	1,155	96.5
Cohabitation prior to marriage				
No	2,353	68.7	1,002	83.7
Yes	1,071	31.3	195	16.3
Age at marriage				
14–18 years old	487	14.2	154	12.9
19–22 years old	1,502	43.9	499	41.7
23–26 years old	996	29.1	392	32.7
27– years old	439	12.8	151	12.6
Education				
Elementary or less	492	14.4	129	10.8
Vocational school	1,145	33.4	356	29.7
Secondary school	1,149	33.6	589	49.2
College or university	638	18.6	123	10.3
Religiosity				
Religious. he/she follows teaching of the church	457	13.3	467	39.0
Religious in his/her own way	1,912	55.8	668	55.8
Does not know	212	6.2	34	2.8
Not religious	843	24.6	28	2.3
Nationality of spouses				
Hungarian-Hungarian			1,037	86.6
Hungarian-Romanian			123	10.3
Other			37	3.1
Total	3,424	100.0	1,197	100.0

In Hungary 12% of persons getting their first marriage were grown up in lone parent family, in Transylvania this rate was much lower, 4%. Data show that divorce was less prevalent at the time of marriage of the respondents' parents in Transylvania than it was in Hungary.

Cohabitation is much less widespread in Transylvania than in Hungary, and this holds for cohabitation prior to marriage too. Before the first marriage one out of three respondents lived together with his/her future spouse in Hungary, while one out of six respondents did the same in Transylvania.

Distribution by age-group at first marriage is almost the same in Hungary and in Transylvania. 13-14% of respondents got married for the first time before he/she reached 19 years of age, a bit more than 40% of them between 19 and 22 years, almost one third of them were 23-26 years old, and one of eight respondents got married for the first time at the age of 28 years or older.

Fairly different situation can be seen concerning the composition by education for people getting married first time in the two populations. One of seven respondents is educated in elementary level or less in Hungary and one of ten respondents in Transylvania. The rate of persons educated in vocational school is one third in Hungary and some percentage point less in Transylvania. Bigger differences can be observed in the further two groups by educational level: one third of the sample finished secondary school in Hungary, while half of the respondents in Transylvania. The rate of college or university educated respondents is two times higher in Hungary than in Transylvania.

Having a look at Table 2, the most important difference between people living in Hungary and living in Transylvania can be immediately seen. Namely, that more than 40% of respondents can be considered as religious in strict sense in Transylvania, whereas this proportion is much smaller: not more than 13% in Hungary. At the same time, one quarter of respondents is not religious in Hungary, and this rate is slightly higher than 2% in Transylvania. People who are religious in their own way take 56% in both population. It can be stated that Hungarian speaking people in Transylvania are much more religious than people living in Hungary.

87% of Hungarian speaking people in Transylvania considered themselves belonging to Hungarian nationality, and their spouse was also Hungarian. In one of ten marriages either of the spouses was Hungarian and the other was Romanian by nationality; and 3% of marriages are in different composition by nationality.[7]

[7] The typology was created by combining two questions: firstly, there was a question about the nationality of the respondents; secondly, the same question was asked about their spouse as well.

Table 3. Distribution of covariates used in event history analysis in Hungary and Transylvania among persons getting their first marriage. Time-varying covariates*

	Hungary		*Transylvania*	
	% of risk period	*Number of divorces*	*% of risk period*	*Number of divorces*
Duration of marriage				
1 year	8.9	30	8.0	6
2 years	8.5	60	7.8	10
3 years	8.0	62	7.4	8
4 years	7.5	55	7.1	5
5 years	7.1	50	6.8	4
6 years	6.6	50	6.5	8
7 years	6.2	51	6.2	5
8–9 years	11.0	66	11.3	15
10+ years	36.3	173	39.0	23
Number of common children				
0	17.2	166	19.6	36
1	33.1	220	41.0	29
2	38.0	165	33.7	15
3+	11.8	46	5.7	4
Calendar period				
1978–1983	4.3	25		
1984–1989	12.1	75	13.0	17
1990–1994	21.0	125	19.4	23
1995–1999	28.5	173	27.3	27
2000–2006	34.2	199	40.3	17
Total	452,562**	597	176,935	84

Note: *Percentage of the whole risk period.
** Risk period in months.

One model was tested for Hungarian data and two different models for Transylvanian data: the second model for Transylvanian data was completed by nationality of the respondent's spouse. The inclusion of this variable improved the explanation power of the second model significantly. The results are shown in Table 4.

To compare the Hungarian and Transylvanian result two identical models are used, and the nationality of the spouse will be analysed later.

In Hungary, as the duration of marriage is increasing, the risk of divorce is also rising significantly until the seventh year spent in marriage: the probability of divorce is five times higher in this year than it was in the first year of marriage. After this period a decreasing trend can be observed. There is no definite tendency in Transylvanian data, rather some fluctuation can be captured: although the divorce risk increases in the second and third years of marriage, it decreases in the fourth and fifth year, and the effect is not statistically significant in the latter two years. In the sixth year the risk highly rises: it is almost four and a half times higher than it was in the first year, and then in the seventh year – contrary to the Hungarian situation – it falls back. The chances are the highest in the 8-9th years, when the probability is six times higher than it was in the first year. Following this period there is a considerable decline from the 10th year.

Family dissolution in childhood makes the chance of divorce almost 1,5 times higher in Hungary, while in Transylvania it has no effect on breaking up the marriage. A possible explanation of this phenomena is that in Transylvania divorce was not that prevalent in the parents' generation, hence it could not influence significantly the proneness of children (that is, our respondents) to divorce.

Cohabitation prior to marriage increases the risk of dissolution of the first marriage significantly - by almost 40% - in Hungary, but there was no similar effect in Transylvania.

Age at marriage has a significant effect on divorce only in Hungary: divorce risk is the highest for marriages contracted at very young age (17-18 years), when it is more than doubled as it was for marriages contracted at age of 27 years or older; after that as the age is increasing prevalence of marriage break-up is steadily decreasing.

The number of children born in the marriage has similar effect on divorce risk for both population: it was the highest for couples without child(ren), definitely decreased for couples with one child, and there was further decline for couples with more than one child. However, there are substantial differences between the Hungarian and Transylvanian risks. In Hungary the probability of divorce for couples with one child is about a half of that for childless couples, and in Transylvania this proportion is only one third. In Hungary divorce risk is decreasing parallel with increasing number of common children. However, in Transylvania the divorce risk is the lowest for couples with two children – it is 17% of the risk experienced for childless couples -, and the risk is slightly higher for couples with three or more children again. To summarize our results, it can be stated that in Transylvania marriages are more stable after childbirth than in Hungary – compared to marriages without a child.

Table 4. Relative risks of dissolution of the first marriage and the significance levels- Hungary and Transylvania

	Hungary		*Transylvania* Model 1		*Transylvania* Model 2	
Duration of marriage						
1 year (ref.)	1.00		1.00		1.00	
2 years	2.61	***	2.46	^^	2.42	^^
3 years	3.32	***	2.67	^	2.58	^^
4 years	3.50	****	2.06		1.98	
5 years	3.72	****	1.95		1.88	
6 years	4.32	****	4.59	**	4.41	**
7 years	5.05	****	3.35	^	3.25	^
8–9 years	3.93	****	6.22	***	6.04	**
10+ years	3.44	****	3.96	**	3.89	**
Intact family in childhood						
Yes (ref.)	1.00		1.00		1.00	
No	1.47	**	0.77		0.85	
Cohabitation prior to marriage						
Yes	1.38	**	1.26		1.09	
No (ref.)	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Age at marriage						
14–18 years old	2.17	**	1.20		1.28	
19–22 years old	1.76	**	1.00		1.00	
23–26 years old	1.37	^	0.89		0.90	
27– years old (ref.)	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Number of common children						
0 (ref.)	1.00		1.00		1.00	
1	0.47	***	0.31	***	0.33	***
2	0.28	***	0.17	***	0.19	***
3+	0.24	****	0.28	*	0.27	*
Calendar period						
1978–1983 (ref. Hungary)	1.00					
1984–1989 (ref. Transylvania)	1.06		1.00		1.00	
1990–1994	1.11		0.89		0.89	
1995–1999	1.22		0.71		0.69	
2000–2006	1.23		0.31	**	0.30	**
Education						
Elementary or less	0.82	^	1.46		1.31	
Vocational school (ref.)	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Secondary school	0.95		1.38		1.42	
College or university	0.84		1.28		1.26	
Religiosity						
Religious. Follows teaching of the church (ref.)	1.00		1.00		1.00	
Religious in his/her own way	1.34	*	1.29		1.27	
Does not know	1.54	*	1.07		1.14	
Not religious	1.63	**	2.50	^^	2.41	^^

Nationality of spouses			
Hungarian-Hungarian (ref.)		1.00	
Hungarian-Romanian		2.44	**
Other		1,63	

Note: Significance levels: ^ < 0.15 ^^<0.1 *<0.05 **<0.01 ***<0.001

Concerning the calendar period of divorce one can observe the increase of the risk as the time goes on, but this effect is statistically not significant in any period. In Transylvania the situation is reversed: the divorce risk is decreasing, but the effect is not significant here, except the latter period. Between 2000–2006 the decrease of the risk is significant, and it is almost one third of that in 1984-1989. The total divorce rate in Romania in 1980 was 0.2, and in 1990 it was 0.19, then it increased from 0.19 to 0.21 between 2000 and 2003 – indicating that these data do not support our results. At the same time we have to remember that our data are about Hungarian speaking people living in Transylvania, who constitute a young subpopulation - 20-44 years old ones -, which can be the causes of discrepancy. Nevertheless, it is not clear what kind of mechanism works here. Therefore, further investigation is needed.

Education and divorce showed a low significant connection only in Hungary: the divorce risk of people with at most elementary education is 80% of those who completed vocational school.

As it was shown earlier, the two societies are fundamentally different concerning religiosity. People are more religious in Transylvania than those in Hungary. In Hungary the divorce risk is increasing gradually as religiosity is decreasing: it is more than one and a half times higher for non-religious couples compared to couples following the teaching of the church. In Transylvania the influence of religiosity is observable as well, although this impact is statistically significant only for non-religious people, but in their case the divorce risk is nearly two and a half times higher than concerning those who follow the teaching of the church.

An additional model was tested for Transylvanian respondents, in which the nationality of the spouse was also included: the divorce risk increased to two and a half times higher for spouses with different ethnic background – but it happened only in the case when the nationality of either of the spouses was Romanian and the other's was Hungarian.

4. Living conditions of divorced[8] people

As it was shown earlier the proportion of divorced persons in the Hungarian population aged 20-44 years is 8.3%, that is 512 persons (182 men and 331 women) in our sample. In Transylvania this proportion is less than half of that (3.7%, 86 persons: 33 men and 53 women). The group of divorced persons will be analysed by sex in Hungary, but not in Transylvania because those 86 cases are not enough for the separate analysis of men and women.

The legal marital status does not determine the partnership status definitely, that is persons with "divorced" marital status can be singles, but they can live in cohabitation too (Table 5).

Table 5. Divorced persons by partnership status at the time of the interview in Hungary and Transylvania, 2005–2006*

Partnership status	*Hungary*			*Transylvania*
	Men	*Women*	*Total*	
Cohabitation	44.8	32.0	36.5	31.2
No co-residential partner	55.2	68.0	63.5	68.8
N (=100%)	181	331	512	81

Note: *Divorced as a legal status

Popularity of cohabitation among divorced persons was slightly lower in Transylvania (31.2%) than in Hungary (36.5%). In Hungary there was statistically significant difference between men and women in divorced marital status concerning living together with a new partner: every third divorced woman lived in cohabitation, while this proportion was 45% for men.

Substantial difference in partnership behaviour can be found between Hungary and Transylvania when among the persons with divorced marital status the proportion of persons divorced from their first marriage is taken into consideration at the time of interviewing. In Hungary three quarters of those persons remained "divorced" (in their marital status) and only one quarter of them got married again. On the contrary, in Transylvania only half of those persons who dissolved their first marriage remained in divorced status, but the other half of them remarried (the number of widowed is very small in both samples). The proportion of divorced persons living in cohabitation is higher in Hungary than of those in Transylvania. To summarize, it can be stated that the main partnership form after divorce is remarriage in Transylvania, and cohabitation in Hungary.

[8] "Divorced" means here the legal marital status of a person, disregarding from the real status (for example, a divorced person can live in a cohabitation).

The living conditions of divorced people can differ substantially from those of non-divorced ones – for example, with regard to housing conditions, labour market activity, income or type of settlement. Concerning housing conditions – beside the ownership of the house/flat, which is not examined here – one of the most important factors is whether the divorced persons live independently or they had to move back to their parent(s)[9] home after the divorce.

Table 6. Divorced persons by co-residence with their parent(s) in Hungary and Transylvania, 2005–2006*

Co-residence with the parent(s)	*Hungary*			*Transylvania*
	Men	*Women*	*Total*	
Yes	20.3	13.3	15.8	39.2
No	79.7	86.7	84.2	60.8
N (=100%)	182	331	513	86

Note: *Divorced as a legal status

In Transylvania 40% of the divorced people live together with their parent(s), which is much higher proportion than in Hungary, where this rate is only 16% (Table 6). In this latter society there is significant difference between men and women: every fifth divorced man lives with his parent(s), while every seventh-eighth woman is in similar situation. It can be in connection with the fact that divorced men having child(ren) can often solve their housing problem only in this way, because the child(ren) remain(s) with their mother in the former common residence in most of the cases. If the common child(ren) stay(s) with the father, the chance of moving back to his parent(s) is higher again, because he hopes receiving some support in performing his family tasks.

Labour market activity can also be related to marital status: the divorced individuals are in greater need of having their own income than people living in partnership, because if they loose their job, they cannot count on the income of their partner. When they live in cohabitation, the greater need of own income stands still in most of the cases, especially in case of fathers paying child allowance

[9]Here we investigated moving back to their own parent(s), but it was discussed earlier that major part of people with "divorced" marital status lived in cohabitation, which means that they could live at parent(s) of their spouse as well, theoretically. This option was also taken into account: two cases were found in Transylvania and four cases in Hungary. It may mean that when people enter into a cohabitation, at the same time they intend to live independently from (their) parent(s). However, it may be applied in an inverse reasoning too: it is possible that people who were able to develop an independent lifestyle after the divorce, have higher chance to enter into a cohabitation, because their lifestyle makes it easier to find a partner.

and mothers with child(ren) from their previous marriage/partnership. Concerning labour market activity we took into consideration only whether the respondent had paid job or not (Table 7).

Divorced people show slightly higher economic activity both in Transylvania and in Hungary than non-divorced people do, but the difference is small. Regarding men and women separately in Hungary, it can be seen that the 75% of men have a job, this proportion is slightly higher in the whole sample (77%); for women, 60% of them participate in labour market in the whole sample, while this proportion is higher, 70% for divorced women. This fact is in line with our knowledge concerning the greater financial need of women after divorce.

Table 7. Divorced persons by economic activity in Hungary and Transylvania, 2005–2006*

Does he/she do earning activity	*Hungary*			*Transylvania*		
	Divorced	*Other*	*Total*	*Divorced*	*Other*	*Total*
Yes	71.7	68.2	68.5	74.4	68.1	68.4
No	28.3	31.8	31.5	25.6	31.9	31.6
N (=100%)	512	5,681	6,193	86	2,238	2,324

Note: *Divorced as a legal status

It is known that prevalence of divorce is higher in cities, in relation with less traditional value system of inhabitants of cities compared to that of people living in villages/rural areas. At the same time, it is possible that more difficult living conditions after divorce can force divorced people to move into villages in the hope of easier living circumstances.

Table 8. Divorced persons by type of settlement at the time of the interview, Hungary and Transylvania, 2005–2006*

Type of settlement	*Hungary*			*Transylvania*		
	Divorced	*Other*	*Total*	*Divorced*	*Other*	*Total*
City	71.9	67.0	67.4	68.6	52.4	53.0
Village	28.1	33.0	32.6	31.4	47.6	47.0
N (=100%)	513	5,680	6,193	86	2,243	2,329

Note: *Divorced as a legal status

Our data show that in Hungary 72% of divorced people live in cities, and although this proportion is higher than the rate of urban people in the sample, but it is not much higher (Table 8). In case of men there is no important difference between divorced and non-divorced ones by the type of the settlement. In Transylvania a bit much than a half (53%) of them live in city[10], but for divorced people this proportion is almost 67%. Thus, divorced people mostly live in cities. Unfortunately, it is difficult to say on the base of my data in what type of settlement the respondents lived before their divorce, hence I can assume that the urban atmosphere which is more permissive than the rural one can make the divorce risk higher; furthermore, it is easier to find a job in the cities (but at the same time the higher living costs can have opposite effect).

5. Summary

The aim of this study was to compare the partnership stability of Hungarian speaking people living in Transylvania and people living in Hungary, mostly concerning the dissolution of the first marriage. After reviewing some features of relationships, some factors of breaking up the first marriage - beside other factors, the family background, the number of common children, religiosity - were discussed. In the last part of the study some characteristics of people with "divorced" marital status were examined.

In Hungary the proportion of singles in the population is much higher than of those in Transylvania, and the situation is similar in case of divorced people as well. The average age at first marriage is about 23 years in both populations. Nevertheless, cohabitation is much more prevalent in Hungary than among Hungarian speaking people in Transylvania.

Analysing dissolution of the first marriage a relevant difference was found between the two samples: 18% of first marriages were dissolved in Hungary, while 7% of those in Transylvania.

The risk of dissolution of the first marriage was examined applying event history analysis. Divorce risk is highly influenced by number of common children and religiosity both in Hungary and in Transylvania: marriage of the childless and of the non-religious is much less stable than of those couples with one or more children and who are religious. The effect of marriage duration could be also detected in both societies. The positive impact of family dissolution in childhood on divorce, young age at marriage and cohabitation prior to marriage was only found in Hungary, while the effect of calendar period was statistically significant only in Transylvania. In this latter case the decrease of divorce risks could be seen between 2000-2006, and to explain this fact further investigations are needed. In

[10] This distortion between people living in rural and urban areas in the two population is possibly caused by involving Budapest into the Hungarian sample, therefore the proportion of people living in cities increases in great extent, nevertheless there is no similar big city in the Transylvanian sample.

Transylvania, Hungarian-Romanian marriages were the least stable, compared to marriages with any other ethnic composition.

Only a part of people divorced from their first marriage had divorced marital status at the time of the interview: in Hungary three quarters of them, but in Transylvania no more than a half of them. A major part of divorced people lived in cohabitation. 20% of divorced people lived together with their parent(s) in Hungary, while in Transylvania this proportion was 40%. Economic activity was higher among divorced than among non-divorced, and more divorced people lived in cities than non-divorced ones.

As a conclusion, after comparing people living in Hungary and Hungarian speaking people living in Transylvania, all aged between 20-44, I can state that Transylvanian people are more conservative in judgement of partnerships and also of dissolution of marriage: they break up their first marriage with lower chance and their common children play a greater role in the stability of their marriage. All these facts are in close connection with religiosity: most of the people in Transylvania are religious, while it holds for a smaller part of people in Hungary.

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Debut of the Sexual and Contraceptive Life of Romanian Female Students. A Qualitative Study

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Abstract: The studies about the sexual and reproductive attitudes and behaviours of young people are still rare in Romania. The results of the four successive Reproductive Health Surveys carried out in Romania between 1993 and 2004 have shed light on the changes in the sexual behaviour of young people after the fall of the communism: the diminution of the age at first intercourse and the increase in the use of modern contraception. However, little is known about the individual and social factors that influence the sexual behaviour and about the manner in which young people interpret their own feelings and sexual experiences. This study is based on two focus groups with female students in the first and second year of study at the Department of Sociology and Social Work from Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, and it aims at enriching data about certain uncovered subjects on the Romanian youth's sexuality.

Keywords: first sexual intercourse, contraception, focus group, sex education

1. Introduction

Before 1989, Romania had a largely spread pattern for entering the sexual life. The social control was exerted in the sense of postponing the union formation and the beginning of the sexual life for women. The intense efforts to preserve their virginity prevented them from breaking a cardinal rule and dishonouring both the family and wife. By contrast, men were encouraged to prove their manhood at a precocious age. Therefore, they began their sexual life much earlier than the majority of women, with prostitutes or older women. This pattern was also specific for the Southern European countries (from Portugal to Greece). The women from this group of countries still register the first sexual intercourse the latest in Europe, and have been allowed only recently to have premarital sexual relationships (Bozon 2003).

Starting from 1990, Romania has traversed a process of rapid changes in the sexual and reproductive behaviour of young people, following a pattern almost similar to that of other Western European countries. The broadening of the periods between the beginning of the sexual life, the moment of marriage and the occurrence of children have increased the probability of premarital sex, cohabitation, unwanted pregnancies and nonmarital births. Despite the new tendencies, age of first intercourse for women is high and a double standard model persists, with women experiencing their first sexual intercourse later than men. Concerning union formation, rates of cohabitation are low, although marriages are postponed and nonmarital birth rates are high (Oaneş and Hărăguş 2009: 46).

In 2004, for Romanian women, the mean age at first sexual intercourse was 19.3 years, and the mean age at first marriage was 25 years (a difference of about 5.7 years). For men, the mean age at the sexual debut was 17.9 years, and the mean age at first marriage was 28.3 years (a difference of about 10.4 years). It results that the difference between the mean age at first sex for women and men was 1.4 years, and the difference between the mean age at first marriage for men and women was about 3.3 years.[1]

The research on the sexual behaviour of students carried out in the year 2002 in six European countries (Bulgaria, France, Italy, Poland, Romania, and Russia)[2] brought new insights of the first union formation and sexual intercourse and about the use of contraception for this specific category of young people. In Romania, the median ages at the first union are almost identical for men and women (17.6, respectively 17.5 years). For Romanian students, the first union appears previously to the first sexual intercourse, pattern also similar for students from Italy and Poland (at later ages), respectively from Russia and Bulgaria (only for women). Things look different for French students, for whom the constitution of first union appears after the sexual debut. Romanian men follow a more precocious pattern than women concerning the first sexual intercourse, so that there is a difference of 2.3 years between the median ages at the sexual debut of the two sexes. If for men, the median age at the first union almost coincide with the median age at first sex (17.6 years respectively 17.8 years), for women, there is a difference of about 2.5 years between the occurrence of the two events (17.5 years, respectively 20.1 years), indicating the tendency of women to postpone the sexual relations until they consider that their couple has gained sufficient stability. Compared to respondents from the other countries, Romanian female students

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[1] Data are taken from the Demographic Yearbook of Romania for the year 2006, and from the Final Report of the Romanian Reproductive Health Survey carried out in 2004, whose results are representative for the whole population of reproductive age in Romania.

[2] The international research has been initiated and coordinated by the "Research Group in Young Demography" from Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Rostock, and the study for Romania has been conducted by Cornelia Mureşan from "Babeş-Bolyai" University in Cluj-Napoca.

begin their sexual life the latest (the median age is 20.1 years), with the exception of Poland (the median age is 20.8 years). Over 70% of Romanian female students have started their sexual life with a steady partner, pattern also similar for Italy and Poland (89.9%, respectively 77.9%).

Regarding the contraception at the sexual debut, Romanian students use condom in the greatest extent (73.1% of male students and 57.8% of female students), meaning that students are more aware about the risk of sexually transmitted diseases and of unwanted pregnancies. The level of condom use among female students is similar in Romania, Italy, and Poland, lower than in France, but higher than in Russia and Bulgaria. The very small percentage for the use of pill among Romanian students (2.4% for men and 5.6% for women) suggests that the moment of first sexual intercourse has not been previously planned. Female students from Poland and France use in the greatest extent the pill at the first sexual intercourse. About 13% of Romanian students, both men and women, did not use any contraception at the sexual debut.

Following-up the quantitative study on the sexual behaviour of students from 2002, in the present study we intend to investigate in a deeper manner: a) the beliefs and attitudes of the female students regarding the significance of the first sexual intercourse; b) the contraceptive behaviour and the attitudes towards contraception during the first intercourse; c) the influence of certain social factors (family, peer group, school, etc.) on the debut of the sexual life and on the use or non-use of contraception during the first intercourse of female students. We also intend to detect the beliefs and attitudes of the female students concerning the sexual education (who should deliver it, at what age, and what it should consist of).

2. Qualitative methodology and sample description

We have used the focus group in the completion of a previous research in the *post-survey* form, organizing group discussions with some persons with similar characteristics with those who participated in the survey, with the purpose of enlightening, deepening and completing some information resulted from the survey; thus, we have designed a sort of extension of the quantitative research, intending to gain a significant increase of knowledge in the investigated area (Rotariu and Iluţ 1997: 65, 68).

In the last 20 years, an extension of the use of the qualitative methods that investigate the subjective aspects of sexuality and clarify the socio-cultural context shaping these experiences has been registered. In the following, we will review some merits of the use of focus groups in the study of sexuality, as they were revealed by the British author Hannah Frith (2000). In her vision, the main benefits of the focus group in the research of sexuality include 3 aspects: 1) it allows the exploratory research of certain subjects little or less explored; 2) it allows the researcher to get acquainted with the language or the vocabulary typically used by the participants when they confess about their sexual activities; 3) it offers favourable conditions for participants to feel comfortable and encouraged enough for discussing their sexual experiences.

This method provides an efficient way to obtain a large palette of information in a short period of time and with low costs. The rapidity of obtaining such information can be very valuable for the evaluation of new questionnaires, as well as to design programs for sexual health.

Most research about sexuality is based on the volunteer participation of some persons who accept to reveal sensitive information about their own sexual activity and who consent to offer details about the most intimate aspects of their life. To speak openly about the most sensitive aspects of your own life is not an easy task at all because any issue related to own sexuality makes most people feel embarrassed. The open communication about sexual matters is further inhibited by the inadequate sexual vocabulary, with people oscillating between slang and polite terms, which are considered too technical to be used in the common language. Therefore, one of the biggest challenges for the researcher is the capacity to create a comfortable context so that participants can feel relaxed enough to offer complete and sincere confessions and explanations on their sexual activity. In this matter, researchers in the area of sexuality have concentrated their efforts to reassure the participants that aspects such as the private character of the discussions, the anonymity and confidentiality are communicated effectively to the group members and they have adopted a set of practices to reinforce these ethical aspects (Frith 2000).

Nowadays, there are sufficient studies stating that focus groups encourage the disclosure of certain information related to sexuality under 3 forms: 1) the awareness of some common experiences lived by the group members can encourage the discussion about difficult and sensitive aspects; 2) the agreement between group members can help to the construction of a more complete and elaborated image about their opinions, and 3) the disagreement between group members can determine the participants to defend their points of view and thus to detail their own opinions.

In order to encourage the reciprocal sharing of information about the personal experiences, researchers recommend that the group should be constituted by persons having at least one common trait, for example to have the same age, the same occupation, the same sex or the same sexual orientation (Morgan 1988, in Frith 2000).

The role of the focus group moderator is to encourage the answers, to be neutral about the content of responses, supervising carefully his or her verbal and non-verbal behaviour. To encourage an adequate behaviour of the participants, the researcher-moderator has to establish right from the beginning of the activity certain group rules that emphasize the importance of ensuring a non-threatening and non-evaluative climate, where the opinions of each participant are accepted and respected. Even if sometimes participants challenge each other, disapprove or contradict the others' opinions, this situation can have positive valences, providing more detailed information; consequently, these situations are not necessarily perceived as hostile or unpleasant experiences (Frith 2000).

The sensitive nature of the research in the area of sexuality often raises the issue of confronting with the social desirability of the answers to the questions of the moderator (Catania et al. 1990). In the development of the focus group, the presence of other members can pressure the participants into manipulating their answers in order to present them as they wish to be perceived by others and not as they really are (Frith 2000). Other inconveniences of focus groups derive from the fact that the researcher who conducts them has to be a person with many abilities – to interview, to moderate, and to negotiate – qualities not easy to be encountered in the same person. On the other hand, no matter how qualified this person is, distorting phenomena may appear such as the dominance of the discussion by one-two participants or the groupthink, which means a non-critical agreement in expressing an idea or a solution (Rotariu and Iluț 1997: 68).

Our research based on focus groups was carried out in May 2009 among female students in the first and second year at the Department of Social Work of "Babeş-Bolyai" University. We selected the participants following the criteria of homogeneity (female students at the same department and from the same year of study) in order to focus, reduce and simplify, and the criteria of convenience in order to save time and costs (Krueger and Casey 2000). The procedure of selection consisted of the presentation of the theme and of the purposes of the focus group at the end of a regular course, after which some female students accepted voluntarily to participate in the group activity that we scheduled together in terms of place, date, and time.

We conducted two focus groups; the characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1. We provided an appropriate room for group activities (having a round table with chairs ranged in circle, ensuring the adequate visibility of all the participants and a face to face distribution of the persons). We used an interview guide corresponding to our research purposes. At the beginning of each interview, we paid special attention to the discussion of some ethical aspects of great importance for the good development and success of the group activity.

Table 1. Characteristics of the female students who participated at the focus groups

Characteristic		*Number of subjects*
Age	19 years	2
	20 years	6
	21 years	2
Year of study	I	5
	II	5
Place of residence	Cluj-Napoca	4
	Other places	6
Started sexual life	Yes	6
	No	4
Age at first sexual intercourse	17 years	3
	19 years	2
	20 years	1

We paid special attention to ensure an atmosphere of safety, psychological comfort and confidence – an essential condition to encourage and stimulate the discussions on such a sensitive theme as that of own sexuality. In this sense, we insisted from the beginning on the idea of preserving confidentiality and anonymity of participants, in what concerned the identity of the persons, as well as in what concerned the resulting written material, thus trying not to generate any moral prejudice to the group members. Therefore, we asked the participants to use during the focus group a different name that we also used for the writing of this paper.

In the course of the focus groups we adopted a neutral position, through which not only did we not confess opinions and events from our personal life, but we did not initiate observations, remarks or value judgements related to the confessions and debates launched by the participants. Our role in the focus group consisted of launching the discussion subjects, preventing certain members to monopolize the discussion, and encouraging each member to express and defend their point(s) of view. With the approval of participants, we recorded the focus groups and then we transcribed them (Krueger and Casey 2000). In the interpretation of the data resulted from the two focus groups we used the thematic analysis, having the individual as unit of analysis. Where the data permitted us, we presented excerpts of the interaction of participants.

3. The experience of first sexual intercourse and its determinants

More than half of the participants had begun their sexual life. Among those who started their sexual life, half reported that the event happened before the age of 18, respectively at 17 years.

Regarding the significance of the experience of the first intercourse in the participants' life, there were two categories of opinions: some attached a special significance to this event while others considered that it did not influence too much the course of their subsequent life. We noticed that participants who had not yet begun their sexual life attached greater importance to the first sexual intercourse.

> *"In my case* (the first intercourse) *has not happened yet, but I consider it a very, very important event, a special moment that takes place once in a lifetime and it matters a lot whom with you begin your sexual life."* (Monica, 20 years old)

> *"The fact that I had that intercourse did not change me at all, I have been the same person ever since, I have had the same aspirations, the same way of thinking, I have been the same person as before."* (Mariana, 20 years old, she began her sexual life at 17)

Concerning the experience of first intercourse, both sexual activity and virginity seem to be acceptable for girls. In fact, we detected 3 different attitudes about the context in which participants choose to begin their sexual life: some are convinced that the first intercourse should happen before marriage in order to gain a certain experience, becoming thus more knowledgeable in finding the ideal partner; others would agree to begin their sexual life before marriage only if they are sure they have found the most suitable partner; finally, some of them are firm that sexual relationships should take place only within marriage.

> *"... I had sexual relationships with two boys. I think you must not wait until marriage, but not exaggerate with too many* (partners)*, but I say these* (sexual relations) *maintain a relationship."* (Bubu, 20 years)

> *"... I haven't begun it* (sex life) *and I consider this an important moment. You cannot be indifferent to it. Until I find the boy with whom I really get along well and of whom I think is the right partner for me, I don't see the advantage of doing this step, just for being in trend with others or to gain a certain experience."* (Anca, 20 years)

> *"I haven't started my sexual life and I think that the sexual relation between a man and a woman must take place within marriage; it is a blessing from God that two young people can marry and after that have sexual relations, because then they can have a child, and a child is a blessing for the spouses and the family, and there are other responsibilities. Not only the physical pleasure matters; you also have to think that there are certain risks that you have to assume when you have a sexual relationship."* (Maria, 19 years)

These opinions seem to confirm the previous findings about the connections between religion and the sexual behaviour of adolescence. Thus, young people who have not any religious affiliation present a higher probability to initiate sexual relations in adolescence (Forste and Heaton 1988), and those who belong to a religion that promotes abstinence present the least probability to experience sexual relations (Miller and Olson 1988). A strong level of religiosity, evaluated through the frequency of participation at the religious services and the perception of the importance of religion, is associated with the postponement of the sexual relations (Thornton and Camburn 1989, Whitbeck et al. 1999).

In the course of the focus groups, some participants challenged their interlocutors to elaborate in greater detail their own opinions or to motivate their decisions about a certain subject. For example, when one of the participants stated that she is determined to wait until marriage to begin her sexual life, another participant asked her to say how she would react if her partner would ask her to accept a sexual relation before marriage. This exchange of ideas brought an additional understanding of the way in which participants positioned themselves in relation with the first intercourse.

> – *"I would like to ask Ana if it occurred to her that today boys think all the time (about sexual relations), even if they don't mention it, and if somehow, a boy that seems the right partner for you, in case he asks you, before the wedding, and you do love him very much and you don't want to lose him, have you thought, would you do this step or not?"* (Mariana, 20 years old)

> – *"I would tell him that if he loved me, he would not ask me such a thing, he would wait for it until marriage; because I consider that if he asks me this, it is for his selfish reasons, and not because he wants what is good for me."* (Ana, 20 years old)

One of the participants, in order to highlight that waiting for marriage to start the sexual life not always guarantees satisfactions and automatically brings the respect of the partner, told a short true story of two young people, as she perceived it from her perspective. By this narration, we can get a glimpse of the vocabulary and the language used by the respondents in the area of sexuality.

> *"Each one with their own consciousness … I have an example, they are my neighbours, and they did not begin their sexual life until marriage; everything was well until the sexual act, when she got pregnant and had her first child. He grew up, now he is 6 years old, but the husband has begun to blame her for all sorts of things and to cheat on her. Once, when he came home drunk, he told her she does not satisfy him and that she does not want children anymore; but she is ill, she has already risked a lot to have the first child and he often goes to other*

> *women. . When she wants to go for a walk in town with her friends, he does not allow her. He always tells her: "Now you are going to other men." She did not have sexual relations before marriage and after 3 years, her husband began to reproach her that she is not "professional", that she does not satisfy him. He had other partners before marriage."* (Fifi, 21 years old)

Other examples suggested that having sexual relations is something necessary to become socially accepted. The wish to behave in a normative social manner is very strong at the age of adolescence (White 1987, in Stanton et al. 1993). In some cases, the peer group or parental pressure to behave in a certain manner plays a dominant role in taking the decision to start the sexual life.

> *"I think it depends on the context and on the persons who surround you, on the peer group at which you adhere; if the values of the peer group or of the family in which you enter or of your husband say that a woman should be virgin at marriage, it is normal to take into account this aspect."* (Kim, 21 years old)

Concerning the intrinsic rewards of the sexual debut, the majority of participants perceived the first intercourse as a positive experience. However, the first intercourse was different compared to other experiences because it was accompanied by strong feelings and fears. The need to satisfy her curiosity was a reason to start the sexual life for one of the participants. In one case, the first sexual intercourse was more than an unpleasant experience, which invalidated any possible subsequent sexual experiences.

> *"... I had sexual relations with two boys, but the first time was not different from the others. It was a pleasant experience, nothing wrong happened. Every intercourse is special; all right, maybe* (at the first intercourse) *I only had more sensations."* (Iringo, 19 years old, she began her sexual life at 17)

> *"I began my sexual life at 20, after dating for two years and at the beginning I was very afraid to make this step. I discussed it with my mother and she told me: "Yes, it's ok, but take care because you know haw many sexually transmitted diseases there are and how many bad things can happen". I calmed down some time later. After the first intercourse, I felt very "dirty" and I wished no other sexual contact with any boy.* (Fifi, 21 years old)

With the single exception of a participant who began her sexual life immediately after she met her first boyfriend, the other students highlighted the importance of developing a stable relationship prior to the beginning of the sexual life, having marriage as desideratum in some cases. The sexually active participants stated that sexual relations form an integral part of a stable relationship and that they made the decision to start their sexual life only at the moment they considered their relationship to be steady enough.

> *"All I'm saying is that me and my boyfriend, I started my sex life with him, we've been together 5 years and after 2 years we took this step. The main reason for doing this was that we got along well and still do, I know him pretty well in 2 years, I got to know what his intentions were, what his ideas, thoughts and future plans were and it was like I knew that we all need this ..."* (Mariana, 20 years old)

Students provided messages that rejected sex before marriage due to religious values (for example, *"Having sex before marriage is a sin. I do not want to allow a sexual relation to break my personal relationship with God."*) and messages that accepted sexual relations outside a marital relation (for example, *"Sex is something intimate and something you share with someone important." "Sex is a natural stuff."*)

As to the consequences of the sexual activities during the adolescence, participants cited the risk of accidental pregnancies, of sexually transmitted diseases and of other health issues associated with the precocious debut of the sexual life.

> *"If you start your sexual life later than, say, 18 or 20, it's very well, but if you start it at a young age, you run the risk of health related dangers, diseases, maybe even cancer and if you start sexual life at 12, 11, genitals do not develop as they should do.* (Fifi, 21 years old)

I asked the participants which was the most important factor that influenced them to start the sexual life or to postpone the sexual debut. Female students not sexually active invoked mostly the special relation they have with God and the belief that sexual relations should develop within the frame of marriage. For sexually active participants, the most important reason for starting their sexual life was having a stable and enduring partnership and the fear of not losing their partner by postponing too much their abstinence. In a single case, the first sexual intercourse intervened at the very beginning of the partnership.

> *"The Bible says that sexual relationships are a gift within marriage. God makes us enjoy sexual relationships in marriage and this is my creed and I know it will be better for me if I wait till then. This is how I think."* (Ana, 20 years old)
> *"… in a way I didn't want to lose him, I guess. I was thinking that he had been patient for 2 years and waited for me and we were getting along very well. We didn't have fights, he didn't make me or force me, and neither did he tell me that he would leave me if I didn't start my sexual life, he didn't threaten me in any way, but I just thought it was the right moment."* (Mariana, 20 years old)

Parents are the first agents of socialization for their offspring. In this position, parents have the unique opportunity to offer their children values, beliefs and facts in the area of sexuality, which will help them understand sexuality and will have long term effects upon the decisions regarding their own sexuality taken later in their life (Kim and Ward 2007). Mothers serve as a primary socializing factor for young girls (Wyatt et al. 1999). In some cases, participants discussed about sexuality concretely and deeply with their mothers, in other cases, discussions in this field had been more general. In unanimity, the participants' mothers started their sexual life after marriage and had expectations, even if not explicit, that their daughters adopt, in their turn, the same behaviour.

> *"I could say on this question that my family is actually my mother. I haven't talked to my father or my brother about this topic, but mum was different, we would talk every day, no matter the subject. I had learned a lot from mum before starting my sexual life. We had talked about the right age to start sexual life and about sexually transmitted diseases, how to protect myself. She had told me straightforward (about this): "You can use a condom or there are other methods. It's your choice what you want to use." She explained which was more efficient, which protected better, everything in detail, not in general."* (Mariana, 20 years old)

> *"I also talked to mum a year before (starting the sexual relationship), she explained some stuff to me, I didn't tell her I had had a relationship but she realised it all right. Mum is not disappointed, nor would she offend me or tell me off for why I had done it, there's nothing she can say now, but I think she would've liked me to postpone it till marriage, just like any parent. (In the discussions with mum) she told me to take care not to make the mistake of, God forbid, getting pregnant, but only in general terms. I had to find out the real thing by myself."* (Bubu, 20 years old)

Many participants remembered they had been told to avoid sexual relations and the risk of having babies until marriage; however, the sexual information did not include concrete aspects for girls to fully understand the functioning of the body, the consequences of the sexual activity and the importance of taking healthy decisions. Despite this, it is worth mentioning that the discussion about sexual and romantic relationships is not taboo anymore and, generally, it emerged naturally into the daily conversation, not being avoided by parents and children.

Some of the participants suggested that, although they did not communicate explicitly about sexuality, in their case parents clearly expressed their sexual values through nonverbal or indirect means. One of the participants said *"it was taken for granted"* she was not to engage in sexual relations until marriage. For some participants their parents seem to attach a greater importance to the academic achievements of their daughters, which they put above their social life.

One participant was told: *"You don't need to date boys while you are still young. Boys will take your mind off from learning. Just focus on your studies now."*

One of the mothers who had her first birth very early – fact that hampered her to continue her studies – expressed the hope her daughter would avoid the mistake she had made years ago.

> *"When I had my first periods we started to talk in more detail and she told me "I had you when I was 20 years old", then she got married, so I should not make the same mistake. She was sorry she had done it too soon because she would have liked to attend the university, that was her dream, and I happened to come to the world. But she was happy to see me; dad came to the hospital and was very happy."* (Fifi, 21 years old)

Some parents expressed their agreement about the ability of the participants to take their own decisions regarding the romantic encounters and sexual relations, and they advertised them about the peril of the wrong choices. One student said:

> *"I think my parents trust me that I'm the type of person that avoids such things. Mum told me that I could tell right from wrong. She advised me not to enter a relationship where I didn't feel comfortable and not to let myself pushed into having sex by any boy, not to let myself be controlled rather I was to control the relationship I was in."* (Anca, 20 years old)

The interventions of parents included vague messages about sexual abstinence (for example, *"Don't do it!", "Sex will ruin your life!"*), educational information about sexuality (for example, *"how children are born"* or *"My mum explained to me the idea of sex when I was younger."*) and norms related to gender differences (for example, *"If you give in quickly, your boyfriend will not respect you.", "Mother told me to be a good girl!"*) or messages containing sexual stereotypes about boys (for example, *"Boys have wrong intentions.", "Boys will lie to you to get what they want, but after that, they will not care about you at all.", "You cannot trust boys.", "My father told me to take care with boys because they are sneaky, he said he would break their legs if they mistreat me."*).

Most girls perceive their mothers as a source of support and as persons with whom they can openly discuss various aspects of sexuality. Only one participant claimed she had openly discussed about sexual matters with both parents.

> *"In my case, both my parents talked to me, not together like in group talk, but separately. For example, dad told me a great many things about illnesses, instructed me as to sexually transmitted diseases, and talked to me about my body. I really enjoyed talking to him about my body, about how I was supposed to protect myself, about micro-organisms, infections and so on. With mum I would talk about values, what is right, how is right. She's never told me to*

start my sexual life earlier or later, I've had much independence and autonomy in what concerned my body and my health, even if they did give me friendly advice and even if I made mistakes, there has been no threat of me being excluded from the family, as happens in many cases." (Kim, 21 years old)

The majority of participants at the focus groups have older or younger siblings, but the subject of sexuality is not always discussed with them. However, when siblings are younger and respondents already began their sexual life, discussions about sexuality are common, and more than that, respondents advise their siblings in sexual matters.

"I've talked with my younger brother, who's 18 years old… My younger brother is always asking me intimate serious things and I am very open to him. Moreover, I give him explanations just like mum informed me, now I tell him, even if he's a boy ad knows a lot of stuff. "If you want to start so early, even if you have a girl friend, think well, it shouldn't happen so early, you have plenty of time till you turn 20 or 30." (Fifi, 21 years old)

Regarding the role of peer group, most participants admitted that, after family, friends counted the most in what discussions about sexuality are concerned.

"Most of my group of friends started their sexual life; nobody has got married yet, but they've been in steady relationships for four or five years, not married yet. I've been talking to the girls about contraceptives, about protection, about sexual practices." (Beti, 20 years old)

Some of participants did not perceive any influence of the peer group over their own behaviour, while other participants felt the group's pressure at the beginning of their sexual life.

"I have two friends, one is of the opinion that no (it's not good to start sexual life before marriage) and the other who's started her sexual life and all I can say is that neither has influenced me. I've learned things from both; yet, my opinion is firm, it is better to wait till after the wedding." (Monica, 20 years old)

"There was the "trend 17", that is that it is ok (to start sexual life) at 17. They would say that at 18-20 you are already mature, an adult and it no longer makes sense at this age, it's no longer exciting. You had to do it at 17 because you had the opportunity to gain some experience and find a partner to satisfy your personal needs and it was quite a pressure from the group." (Kim, 21 years old)

While students who had already started their sexual life belong to groups of friends that in their turn are sexually active, those who did not begin their sexual life made friendships with persons who had similar values and beliefs.

> *"Generally, when you have a group of friends, you share the same beliefs and do similar things; in my case, some of the girls have similar beliefs with me and it's obvious that this reinforced my beliefs. The girls in my group of friends haven't started having sex yet."* (Maria, 19 years old; she has not started her sexual life)

In some instances, participants felt they were being judged by the members of their peer group for their behaviour or reported situations in which they felt the need to give advice to other girls from their group in sexuality matters.

> *"Even if there are some who seem surprised that I am still a virgin at 20, I really don't care what they think or say. My friends started their sexual life… some support me, others make jokes, but I don't mind."* (Anca, 20 years old)

> *"I have a friend and she told me that she started her sexual life and I didn't judge her for this and now we help each other with advice. She told me she was disgusted at the beginning; she started her sexual life for his sake, because he wanted it. Now they want to get married. I told her: "If you had made this step, there's no way back. Try to consolidate the relationship and get married."* (Ana, 20 years old)

Another question referred to the role that school could play at the debut of sexual life of young persons. Participants recognized they spoke with their colleagues about aspects of sexuality. It seems that there was a gender separation among school colleagues and that this division facilitated the discussion about more intimate subjects.

> *"At our school, we were 20 girls and 5 boys. The girls formed a group and the boys formed another. We talked very much about sexuality. My classmates (who started their sexual life) shared their experiences with us."* (Monica, 20 years old)

Based on the participants' statements, teachers from secondary and high school can be classified into two categories in terms of the influence they had on the sexuality of female participants: one category of teachers, especially class masters/ mistresses, avoided this subject, treated it with embarrassment, while the other paid a special attention to this subject, a fact that was remarked, appreciated and considered very useful by the young girls.

"We used to talk with our class mistress but she didn't have any influence on us because she was always embarrassed, we didn't even understand what she wanted to say and it was more like having fun than being influenced. She was ashamed to utter the word sex." (Iringo, 19 years old)

"We would talk a lot about it in our general guidance classes. At times, she would organize talks only with girls or only with boys and there were times when she would bring us all together and we would all have debates. She would have us face each other and debate sexuality, hygiene issues, and other topics… These classes were mostly interactive; she would encourage us to ask questions." (Mariana, 20 years old)

Almost every subject participated in school campaigns that promoted the body hygiene and, sometimes, in sexual education classes, but these activities were at irregular intervals and did not follow a carefully organized programme. However, participants considered them useful.

"I was in secondary school when they first showed up, I was 14, and they talked to us mostly about condoms and contraceptives… It seemed ok to me because I thought that we needed information and it was for our benefit." (Beti, 20 years old)

"In school, we were mostly informed about diseases. They would come from the surgery and deliver classes on the human body, about how to protect ourselves against certain diseases, about complications that appear if we get pregnant and do not tell our parents or if we hide the pregnancy and give birth in unfavourable conditions… They would also come from institutions and organizations. In high school they came twice, once in the 9th grade and once in the 12th grade and told us about periods, when and what to do, that is not to get scared, it is something natural. This is information we could use and it is still useful." (Fifi, 21 years old)

When asked about other factors that could play a role on the decision whether to begin or not the sexual life, participants mentioned mass media, about which the opinions were divided. On the one hand, some students supported the idea that images and information with sexual content presented in mass media are exaggerated; on the other hand, they found information from mass media welcome.

(In mass media, sexuality) *"is not expressed in an exaggerated manner; there were Bravo and Cool Girl, they had advice columns, you would ask certain questions and specialists would give you answers. The questions were not exaggerated, they were really useful. If I remember well, there was a girl who started her sexual life at 10 and got pregnant and her parents drove her away from home. A psychologist and a physician answered her. The answers were really interesting and I considered them useful." (*Fifi, 21 years old)

"They present things in a very vulgar way on TV. And in newspapers, take for instance ProSport or others, you can find in all pictures of naked women and I think this is too much." (Maria, 19 years old)

4. Contraception at the first sexual intercourse

The attitudes about contraception and the capacity to plan the first sexual intercourse influence the use or non-use of the means of protection. However, there are also other variables that enter in the equation. For example, sexual relations are sporadic for many adolescents and therefore difficult to be anticipated. In addition, we have to take into account the effects of the strong desire on the adolescents' behaviour, which did not learned yet to control their emotions. Although adolescents prove good decisional attitudes in hypothetical conditions, the decisions in the real life intervene in conditions that are not optimal, a possible factor being the pressure of time (Adams and Berzonsky 2006). Not in the end, it is important to be aware that in a sexual relation there are two persons involved. Thus, in anticipating the sexual behaviour one must pay attention at the wishes, attitudes, and intentions of the two persons. Moreover, partners tend to differ regarding the power and the control they have in the couple, so that the wishes of one of them are more influent (Hillier et al. 1997). Thus, the sexual communication between the two partners does not guarantee a superior decisional process.

Among the participant students at our focus groups we can distinguish two categories, nearly equal as weight: those who planned the moment of the first intercourse and those who were unprepared for this event. In case the sexual debut had been planned beforehand, student females used a method of contraception – condom in unanimity. Among participants who had an unprotected first intercourse, only one used the emergency contraception (*"the morning-after pill"*).

"The first time, we didn't protect ourselves, I don't know why. It was sort of unexpected. Now, it is him who uses protection." (Iringo, 19 years old)

Although I did not ask an explicit question on this matter, sometimes it resulted from the context, sometimes participants mentioned they had not been confronted with an accidental pregnancy until the moment of the interview. However, some of them had colleagues who got pregnant.

"That very year I had a classmate who got pregnant and it disturbed us greatly, but this happened after and I realized that she should have expected it, that the age did not matter so much." (Kim, 21 years old)

For the students who did not begin their sexual life, the opinions about the use of contraception at the first intercourse are divided: the Christian students are convinced they will not use any contraceptive method at first intercourse, taking into account it will happen in the context of marriage; the other virgin students declared they will take a decision after discussing this subject with their husband, when they will have one.

> *"It seems normal not to use protection when I do it with my husband. I married him as he is, we both had medical checks before getting married; this way you are aware he has this or that disease, if this is how God gave him to you, that's life. But at the first sexual intercourse, you've been waiting for him to be your husband and then you use contraceptives!* (To limit the number of children) *I may use the calendar, but not condoms or contraceptives."* (Maria, 19 years old)

> *"I don't know for sure if I'd use contraceptives. I'm still confused about family planning. It all depends what I would decide together with my husband."* (Ana, 20 years old)

The reasons participants invoked for using contraceptive methods at first intercourse refer, as we expected, to the prevention of STD and to the avoidance of an unwanted pregnancy. It seems participants acknowledge the risks of the non-use of contraception that exist right from the first sexual intercourse. Another common characteristic of the participants who used contraception at the sexual debut were beforehand planning of this event and repeated discussions with their partner about this moment.

> *"I knew that* (my partner) *had had sexual relationships. I knew about two and it seemed natural to protect myself because I was afraid of sexually transmitted diseases and of getting pregnant. Because you can get pregnant at the first sexual intercourse."* (Beti, 20 years old)

However, there were some cases when the non-use of contraception was based on the confidence in the partner and/or the neglect of this issue, which resulted in a situation of risk in what concerns contacting a STD and/or getting pregnant.

> *"we trusted each other and didn't think about this. At the first encounter I thought that my boyfriend hadn't had any relationships, so he had told me, but afterwards I found out that he had. Now it's behind us, I passed through this experience and what should I do? Nothing happened, though. "* (Iringo, 19 years old)

5. Opinions and beliefs about the sexual education

We considered important to ask the participants what their opinions were on sexual education: who should be responsible for it, at what age should it begin, and what should it consist of. It is worth mentioning the unanimity with which participants expressed their belief that sexual education should be provided first of all by parents, within the family.

> *"The family should be the main responsible party. So, when a kid starts school, at about 6 or 7 years old, the family should offer information related to this topic. Then, there's the school, books and so on, but in my opinion, the most important factor is the family."* (Fifi, 21 years old)

Only one participant remarked that parents could lack the knowledge and skills necessary to offer their children an appropriate sexual education. She also highlighted the importance of organising courses in order to prepare the parents to manage issues in this field.

> *"My opinion is that it is pretty difficult to give kids sexual education, you can't just do it without being taught or supported by somebody, by a specialist. One of our teachers at the Faculty recommended that we read Meg Hickling's book[3] on sexual education with advice on how to begin, how to speak to children about sex, how to teach them about their body, how to relate to their partner. The results of the author's work were very good in the field of sexual education; parents who participated at the courses said that after attending her seminars they realized that their lives would have been different if somebody had told them those things when they were little children."* (Kim, 21 years old)

Regarding the age at which sexual education should begin, participants agreed this subject should be approached from the earliest ages until adolescence.

> *"You have to talk to the little one from the very first years. Obviously, how you do it depends on their age. At 5, you won't talk about protection but how a child is born, at their level. We can't hide everything till they turn 14. I've heard of 14-year old kids asking: "If I get kissed, will I have children?"* (Iringo, 19 years old)

In the opinion of the participants, the content of sexual education should be differentiated with respect to children's age. Therefore, at earlier ages, information should be more general, and with children's growing, discussions on sexuality should become more detailed. More students underlined that in the context of

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[3] Hickling, M. (1996). *The new speaking of sex: what your children need to know and when they need to know it.* Kelowna, BC, Canada: Northstone Publishing.

sexual education, discussions should also include topics on how children should behave in order to avoid sexual abuse, an extremely important aspect for the young people's physical and psychological health.

> *"I think that they should teach children how to protect themselves against sexual abuse from an early age, because this is also a risk, they should know about it. It* (sexual education) *should happen in the families – I think that's important."* (Ana, 20 years old)

Although the majority of participants originate from families in which they communicated with parents, especially with the mother, about sexual matters, some of them admit there still are quite a lot of persons who still consider sexuality a taboo issue, which should not be brought into discussion.

> *"Many still consider sexuality a taboo, feel embarrassed, and that's why they don't want to talk about sexuality, it seems a sin to them, a shameful thing."* (Fifi, 21 years old)

6. Conclusions and reflections

If we try a comparison – even not very appropriate, because of the different methodology used – between the two researches – carried out in 2002 through a quantitative questionnaire and in 2009 through focus groups – regarding the two behaviours – the age at the sexual debut and the use of contraception at the first sexual intercourse – one might observe that the median age at the sexual debut tends to decrease (20.1 years in 2002 versus 18 years in 2009), while the use of contraception seems to hold its characteristics (in 2009, as in 2002, condom remains the preferred mean of contraception, but there still are female students who do not use protection at the first sexual intercourse).

The studies concerning the sexuality of adolescents were focused so far almost exclusively on the behaviour, as a result of the concerns about the pregnancy in adolescence and the sexually transmitted diseases. Such an approach allows only a partial comprehension of the sexuality of adolescents, neglecting the subjective and interpersonal dimensions that reflect the psychological context of the sexual relations. Thus, we know many issues about the sexual behaviour of adolescents, especially about the sexual act, but very little about their motivations to experience sexual relations or about the significance they attach to their own behaviour (Adams and Berzonsky 2006). In our study, we tried to get a more detailed picture on these under-explored areas of adolescents' sexuality. The results of our study can be further exploited in generating new research instruments for investigating the more nuanced aspects of the adolescents' sexuality and in designing programs for the well-being of young generation. For instance, policy makers in the field of family, sexual and reproductive health education should become more sensitive on the opinions of the participants that parents should be the main providers of the sexual education for children and adolescence, therefore they should design programs focused on the education and skills development for parents in order to satisfy their children's needs in the area of sexuality.

The framework of group discussions allowed the expression of a large diversity of opinions and perceptions regarding the potentially relevant factors for the sexual activity among adolescents. However, beyond the benefits focus groups provided in terms of the richness in meanings of our findings, we are aware that these discussions could not reveal the entire range of behaviours. In addition, we are aware about the uncertainty about the reliability of the participants' statements, and that focus groups do not allow us to produce generalizing data, or to stream inferences valid for larger populations (Basch 1987).

Another aspect we want to emphasise is that our focus groups were composed exclusively of female students. We did not have access at male students' voice, as their number is extremely small in our department. We expect that conducting focus groups with male students will lead to different results in what concerns the significance of the first sexual intercourse and the use of contraception during the sexual debut, as compared with female students.

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Nonmarital Childbearing in Romania

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Abstract: One important demographic change that followed the fall of the communist regime in Romania has been the increase of non-marital childbearing. Throughout this article we want to see whether this behaviour is an expression of the second demographic transition and its forerunners are high educated women, or it is a pattern of disadvantage that characterises rather low educated persons. We conduct our analysis on *Generations and Gender Survey* data and we approach the topic from the life course perspective. The rich data that we use allow us to reconstruct the partnership and fertility histories of 6,001 women. We use the technique of event history analysis and investigate the influence of different background factors and personal characteristic on the transition to the first nonmarital birth. Our results indicate that childbearing outside marriage in Romania is rather a pattern of disadvantage.

Keywords: nonmarital childbearing, cohabitation, single mothers, education, Romania

1. Introduction

Over recent decades, fertility outside marriage increased dramatically in Europe. In early 1960, less than 10% of children were born out of wedlock in most countries (Kiernan 2004, Thomson 2005). In the year 2007, the recorded level is high: most Western, Central and Eastern European countries have 25-40% of total births outside marriage, all North European countries and the UK, Austria and France have 40-50% of births out of wedlock, and Iceland registers the maximum level of 64% of extramarital births. Some Southern European countries have registered only modest increases over this period: for example in Greece and Cyprus, only 6% and 9% of births were extramarital in 2007, but these countries are rather an exception (Eurostat 2009).

These figures alone do not reflect the complexity and diversity of the nonmarital fertility process. Much of this growth is attributed to the separation of marriage and fertility and not necessarily to the separation between stable couple relationships and fertility. Studies show that most of the growth of fertility outside marriage in Europe in recent decades occurred in consensual unions (cohabitation) (Kiernan 2004, Musick 2007).

Population studies approaches childbearing outside marriage more or less specific, often including different family forms, not differentiating between birth in a stable consensual union and birth by a single mother (this is the U.S. approach). European researchers, on the other hand, accentuate the idea of cohabitation stability and tend to treat it as similar with marriage, emphasizing the importance of the existence of union, no matter legalized or not. In the U.S., extramarital childbearing, even combined with cohabitation and not as single mother, has been considered a social problem, while in Europe cohabiting unions are assumed to be stable and very similar to marriages (Perelli-Harris et al . 2009). Still, many studies show that marital and cohabiting unions differ substantially in many aspects, especially in terms of the risk of union dissolution (Thomson 2005).

The conception or the birth of a child and the formation of partnership are two interwoven processes in the women's life course, with reciprocal influences. To fully understand the process of nonmarital childbearing we need a clear picture of the cohabitation as alternative living arrangement .

The scientific literature analyse the shift of several European countries through different models of couple formation (Perelli-Harris et al. 2009), and most authors start from the experience of Sweden, the nation that has gone furthest in terms of the spread of cohabitation, identifying several stages in this process. In the first stage, cohabitation is a deviant or vanguard behaviour, practised by a small part of the unmarried population, while most of the population marry directly. In the second stage, cohabitation functions as a prelude or a trial period that test the durability of the relationship, before marriage and commitment, this form being a stage without procreation. In the third stage, cohabitation becomes socially accepted as an alternative to marriage and parenthood is not limited to the married. In the fourth and the last stage, cohabitation and marriage are undifferentiated, with children born and raised in both marriage and cohabitation. Sweden and Denmark are countries that have reached the fourth stage. Perelli-Harris and collaborators (2009) argue that these stages may vary in duration, but once a society has reached a stage, is unlikely to return to the previous one. Also, once a certain stage is reached, all previous types of cohabitation can coexist. These steps are equivalent at the individual level, too: at any time, cohabitation may have different meanings for the couple involved, may be an alternative to celibacy, a pre-marriage or substitute for marriage.

This perspective on cohabitation highlights the diversity of the phenomenon and raises the question of the position of our country in this evolutional process. For the first time, the census of 2002 recorded consensual union as a de facto arrangement, and it recorded the value of 4.6% for the population aged 15 and above. The result is certainly underestimated (Rotariu 2006), given the novelty of the term for both the population and for operators. But this very low level officially recorded includes information about the degree of social acceptance of the phenomenon and makes us appreciate that on the evolution process mentioned above Romania is, at best, in the second stage.

The proportion of nonmarital births from all live births is much higher than the officially registered level of cohabitation: 26.7% in 2002, with a maximum of 29.6% in 2004. This discrepancy raises questions about the character of nonmarital childbearing in Romania. The aim of this article is therefore twofold: first, to draw a clear picture of out of wedlock reproductive behaviour in Romania, from a life course perspective, and second, to investigate whether we are in the presence of a post-modern behaviour and the most educated persons are its forerunners, similar to northern and western European countries, where parenthood is assumed in cohabiting unions, or we are rather dealing with a significant proportion of single mothers. In other words, we study whether nonmarital childbearing is an expression of the second demographic transition, meaning that the increase in the last decades was mainly due to births in consensual unions and higher education is associated with the phenomenon, or, on contrary, the growth in nonmarital childbearing comes mainly from single mothers, as a pattern of disadvantage, and low education is associated with higher rates of nonmarital fertility (Perelli-Harris and Gerber 2010).

We conduct our investigation on data from *Generations and Gender Survey* for Romania (2005), which contains retrospective information on 6,001 women's partnership and fertility histories. The data allow us to approach the topic from a life course perspective and to investigate the impact of different factors on nonmarital childbearing.

2. Theoretical framework

One of the most widespread explanations for family change is the theory of the second demographic transition. Van de Kaa (2001) specifies that the changes in family related behaviours occurred in a sequence and he distinguishes 15 steps in this process, as experienced by a number of Western European countries. Started with the decline in total fertility rate due to reduction in fertility at higher ages, the process advances with the postponement of childbearing within marriage and postponement of marriage itself, concluding with a strong increase in cohabitation, even in countries where this was not a traditional practice, and a strong increase in the proportion of births outside marriage. In other words, nonmarital childbearing is one of the signature elements of the second demographic transition (Perelli-Harris and Gerber 2010). Analysing data from a large number of industrialized countries, van de Kaa (2001) observes that the decline in fertility has occurred or seems to be occurring everywhere, while the matrimonial transition is a considerably less general phenomenon.

Fifteen years after launching the concept of the second demographic transition, its proponents (van de Kaa 2001, Lesthaeghe 2010) admit that three dimensions of social change played a role in the important demographic shifts that we have mentioned: social-economic change and progress in society, the population's cultural endowment and the changes in value systems, and technological improvements and their application. Lesthaeghe stresses that the second demographic transition theory fully recognizes the effects of macro-level structural changes and of micro-level economic calculus, but it does not consider these explanations as being sufficient (Lesthaeghe 2010). Ideational and cultural changes such as increased emphasis of individual autonomy, the rise of values connected with higher order needs of self-actualization (Perelli-Harris and Gerber 2010), rejection of authority (mainly religion), are brought into picture for a better understanding of the changes of family formation behaviour. Values change when material needs are met and post-materialist values develop. Lesthaeghe concluded, on results from the World Value Survey, that "secular, egalitarian, anti-authoritarian orientations, expressive values and values stressing individual autonomy are strong predictors of life courses that include "unconventional" states such as pre-marital cohabitation and parenthood among cohabitors" (Lesthaeghe 2010: 18).

There is evidence (Mureşan 2007b, Sobotka 2008, Hoem et al. 2009) that the manifestations of the second demographic transition are spreading in Eastern and Central Europe, too, and behavioural changes in these countries from the 1990s were not simply the effect of the socio-economic crisis brought by the change of political regime. In many of these countries the effects of the crises have come to an end, while cohabitation and procreation outside marriage are spreading. Lesthaeghe (2010) notices that the second demographic transition seems to advance faster in the countries with the more successful economic and political performance.

Education is an important factor for the spread of post-materialist values, a central component of the second demographic transition. Sobotka (2008) offers references that support the idea that highly educated individuals have been the forerunners in the values and behaviour associated with the transition. However, in post-communist countries, the lower educated persons are often the early adopters in the spread of cohabitation, nonmarital childbearing, and unstable living arrangements (Sobotka 2008).

We follow the approach of Perelli-Harris and Gerber (2010) and Perelli-Harris and collaborators (2009) and consider that the growth of extramarital childbearing would be an expression of the second demographic transition if it comes primarily from an increase of procreation within consensual unions and if it is associated with high education, considering it a proxy for the ideational shifts in values. Going on the line of the same approach, we consider an alternative explanation, which is the pattern of disadvantage. Perelli-Harris and associates offer evidence that in the U.S. single and cohabiting unmarried mothers are lower educated, have higher rates of poverty and welfare dependency, and that a high proportion of out of wedlock births come from teenagers. Cohabitation in the U.S. tends to be an arrangement of economic necessity or an unstable relationship and not a normative choice reflecting the spread of new value orientation associated with the second demographic transition (Perelli-Harris and Gerber 2010). Descriptions of the second demographic transition refers to the nonmarital childbearing as childbearing in cohabitation; there are no references to single motherhood. Consequently, we consider the extramarital childbearing to be a pattern of disadvantage if the increase of the phenomenon comes primarily from births to single women (i.e. women who were not married and did not live with a partner when the child was born) and if it is associated with low education, considering it as a proxy for disadvantage (Perelli-Harris and Gerber 2010).

In the following paragraphs we make a review of previous research on the issues of cohabitation and childbearing outside marriage in Romania.

Studies on cohabitation in Romania (Iluţ 2005, Rotariu 2006, Hărăguş 2008, Oaneş and Hărăguş 2009) indicate higher proportions of cohabitants among women with low socio-economic level, with lower education, inactive women and women from rural areas. We believe that in Romania living together as a new behaviour is only at the beginning, while cohabitation as a "working class" phenomenon (Speder 2005) is more widespread. In 2002 the proportion of cohabiting couples with children was higher than the proportion of childless cohabiting couples: 3.4% compared to 2.4%[1]. Moreover, the average number of children of cohabiting couples is 1.97, higher than for married couples (1.72). More detailed analysis of the phenomenon (Hărăguş 2008) shows that among women who are in consensual unions, childless women are more likely to have high education and socio-economic level, and to reside in urban areas. Characterizing women that face socio-economic disadvantages, childbearing and

1 Data represent percentage of households composed of a family nucleus, based on 2002 Census.

raising children outside marriage seems not a post-modern behaviour in our country.

Mureşan (2007) shows that alternative types of union formation (i.e. cohabitation) are spreading, as more people begin a first partnership in this form. The vast majority of cohabitations are a precursor to marriage, even though the proportion transformed into marriage is lower than before 1990. Although cohabitations last longer now, they are dissolved in far greater number than in the past. Regarding the births, the study shows that they occur very soon after the (first) marriage and even quicker in a first consensual union. These results may provide additional proof that we are not in the presence of a behaviour similar with those of Western Europe, where the spread of cohabitation takes place concurrently with the postponement of childbearing. Most of the children are born and grown within the first marriage, but in recent years an increase in the number of children born within consensual unions was registered, especially first order births. The share of single mothers remains low, and single fathers are almost non-existent.

Hoem et al. (2009) shows that the attractiveness of direct marriage (not preceded by cohabitation) decreased since the 1990s, while that of cohabitation as a form of partnership grew steadily. Furthermore, once the cohabitation is formed, it remains in this form for longer time, without being turned into marriage.

In a paper on extramarital births in Romania in the year 2007, Rotariu (2009) shows that these generally affect people with no education and living in poverty. The phenomenon has the highest incidence, on the one hand, among young women, at their first childbearing, and on the other hand, among higher order childbearing (third order and above), suggesting the existence of a sub-population of women with multiple out of wedlock births. Extramarital births occur at a lower age than marital ones. For younger ages, below 20 years, there are more extramarital than marital births. Out of wedlock births are more common among people with low education: four out of five women that give birth outside marriage before age 20 have only primary education. Considering occupational status, active women show lower level of nonmarital childbearing than inactive ones, for each educational level. The phenomenon is more present in rural than in urban areas, and it has a high incidence among Roma population, which has a very low standard of living, whose social integration is poor, and who practice a pre-modern lifestyle (Rotariu 2009).

Perelli-Harris et al. (2009) analyse the cohabitation and the nonmarital birth process in Europe from a comparative perspective. The authors' conclusion is that the phenomenon of cohabitation in Romania is marginal, but persistent: though cohabiting couples are relatively rare, when this form of partnership is adopted, it does not turn into marriage once a child comes into the world. The authors insist that this pattern of behaviour may be due to Roma minority, which rejects the official practices of marriage. Rotariu's article (2009) shows that, although 72% of all Roma births are out of wedlock, births of these women represent only 7.4% of total extramarital births registered in Romania in 2007 (while 86.6% belongs to the Romanian ethnic group). Therefore, we can not explain the nonmarital childbearing in Romania by Roma's patterns of family formation.

Our contribution to the topic comes with our approach, that is a life course perspective, making use of *Generations and Gender Survey* retrospective data. Since a childless women can give birth of a child within a marriage, within a consensual union or while she did not lived with a partner, we treat these possible situations as competing risks, with the aim to see what form of nonmarital childbearing is the most prevalent. In our multivariate analysis, however, we address the nonmarital births together, without differentiating by type. Using event history analysis, we investigate the impact of different background factors and personal characteristics on the risks of having a nonmarital birth.

3. Data and method

We conduct our analysis using data from *Romanian Generations and Gender Survey* (2005), which has a retrospective design and allows us to reconstruct women partnership and fertility histories and to approach the issue of nonmarital childbearing from the life course perspective. We dedicate our investigation to first births only.

A childless woman is under risk of experiencing one of the following situation: to give birth of a child within a marriage, within a consensual union or while she is single (she does not live with a partner). Transitions to each situation can be considered competing risks, and that means that the occurrence of one event (e.g. first birth within marriage) removes the woman from the possibility of experiencing another event (e.g. first birth within cohabitation). In this setting, the appropriate estimate of the probability of experiencing an event is described by the so-called cumulative incidence (Coviello and Boggess 2004). Using STATA statistical software and the *stcompet* function, we can graphically represent the share of women who have experienced a first birth until a certain age, and the births are distinguished by the type of union they have occurred in.

In our multivariate analysis, we investigate the impact of different background factors and personal characteristics on the timing of first nonmarital birth using event history analysis, namely the piece-wise constant exponential models. All variables included in this type of models are categorical.

Having time as one dimension, this method of analysis gives the possibility to include time varying explanatory factors. The role of these variables is to show that a causal factor had changed its status over time and, consequently, the event under study has been exposed to different causal condition (Blossfeld and Rohwer, 2002). Another advantage brought by event history analysis is the inclusion of censored individuals into analysis. Censored individuals are those who were exposed to the risk of experiencing the event under study (in our case the first nonmarital childbearing) but did not experience it (in our case, women who have experienced a marital birth or who are childless at the moment of the interview). Being under risk but eventually not experiencing an event is by itself important.

We model the time to first nonmarital birth and the process time (i.e., the baseline hazard) is the age of the respondent measured in months since January of the year she turned age 14. Since we study first births, we chose to end the process time at age 40 (there are very few first births above this age in our sample).

This means that our dependent variable is the risk of having a first child outside marriage before age 40, which is given by the hazard or intensity function, whose values are estimated by the occurrence-exposure rates of the event (number of events/(population under risk x duration of exposure to the risk)), given that the individual is under the respective risk. This leaves us with 707 events (i.e., first nonmarital births before age 40).

Results are presented in form of relative risks: the increase in the hazard function (the risk of experiencing the event under study) when one goes from one category to another of the explanatory variables. A relative risk greater than 1 indicates that the risk of experiencing a nonmarital birth is greater in that group than in the reference group, whereas a relative risk lower than 1 indicates the opposite.

We have described two possible alternative explanations for the nonmarital childbearing in Romania: second demographic transition and pattern of disadvantage. In order to test the second one, we use several background factors as independent covariates, such as the type of residence during childhood (until age 15, urban vs. rural), whether the woman had lived with both parents during her childhood (until age 15), number of siblings, mother's education, father's occupation[2], whether the woman has Roma ethnicity, all of them being time constant covariates.

Socio-economic and educational resources during childhood are important for women's future family related behaviour and we use two covariates

2 Instead of father's occupation we would have used father's education as well, but the Romanian Generations and Gender database lacks this information.

that capture the availability of such resources. One is the type of residence (urban vs. rural), another is whether the woman had lived with both parents during her childhood. Usually, the absent parent is the father and this means the lack of significant resources for the daily care responsibilities, for the involvement in child activities, for the financial situation or for emotional support. The presence of only one parent may also mean less control and supervision for the child, and the single mother family model can be easier embraced by the child. Another indicator of family's control over the respondent's behaviour during childhood is the number of siblings she had, assuming that more siblings means less control from behalf of the parents. We also assumed that women that come from a bigger family develop a higher family orientation, so earlier family-related transitions. Mother's education and father's occupation are measures of the human capital of the family of origin, and Roma ethnicity captures a series of socio-economic, educational and cultural characteristics. If nonmarital childbearing in Romania is a pattern of disadvantage then we expect that women who grew up in more disadvantaged family environments (rural areas, larger families, not living with both parents, low education of mother, not prestigious occupation of father, and Roma ethnicity) show higher risks of nonmarital childbearing.

Education is an important covariate for both of the alternative explanations and we created a time-varying covariate that combines educational enrolment and attainment. First wave of *Generations and Gender Survey* did not registered completed educational histories, but only the highest educational attainment, at the moment of the interview, and the date when this level was attained. Using the final educational level as registered at the interview as a (time-constant) covariate assumes that education is a fixed trait of the individual and then we are in the presence of anticipatory analysis. If education is completed before childbearing begins, then this is not problematic. But education may be interrupted because of childbearing and continued some years later, and the final educational level would be different than the one at the moment of childbirth. To overcome this problem, we follow the approach suggested by Hoem and Kreyenfeld (2006) and Mureșan (2009) for data with no complete educational histories, and we assumed that the respondent was enrolled in education all the time before they attained the level reported at the interview, and continuously out of education (with the reported level attained) between the date of attainment and the interview. The resulted variable has the following categories: enrolled in education; not enrolled, low educational attainment (pre-primary, primary and lower-secondary education); not enrolled, medium educational attainment (upper-secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary education) and not enrolled, high educational attainment (tertiary education). As literature suggests, we expect that being enrolled in education to highly reduce the risk of having a birth, as participation in formal education is seen incompatible with childbearing (Blossfeld and Huinink 1991). If nonmarital childbearing in Romania is an expression of the second demographic transition, then we have to find that procreation outside marriage is associated with higher education; if nonmarital childbearing is a pattern of disadvantage, then the association is with low education.

We also introduce a covariate accounting for respondent's religiosity. It was surveyed at the date of interview and we therefore assume that religiousness is a stable trait that does not change over the life course (Kreyenfeld 2004). In line with the second demographic transition, we expect that out of wedlock childbearing to be characteristic to the more secularized individuals.

We also include a time varying covariate accounting for the residence in parental home, expecting that women who already left the parental home to be much more exposed to (nonmarital) childbearing than those still in parental home.

We used two more covariates to take into account the time dimension. First one is the year of birth of the respondent (cohort), and we distinguish among women born before 1950, who where no longer at risk for the first birth after the fall of the communist regime (they turned 40 by 1990), women born between 1950 and 1969, and younger women born after 1970, who spent most of their reproductive life during democracy. The second covariate is calendar period. We distinguish whether the birth appeared before or after the change of the political regime and by the use of this time-varying covariate we take into account the national socio-economic and political context where the birth appeared.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive analysis

We eliminated from the original sample the women with incomplete partnership or fertility histories, which leave us with a sample of 6,001 women and 4,886 first births, of which 707 are nonmarital.

We see from Table 1 that births outside marriage are more frequent at younger ages: almost 10% of births before age 20 happened before forming a first (coresident) partnership, while 12.82% of them happened within the first consensual union. The lowest share of nonmarital births is for the age group 25-29. The share of marital births is the lowest at younger ages (73.57%), and here also the highest share of premarital conceptions that ended in marital births is found (14.40%). Low shares of first childbearing take place subsequent to the first partnership, and this pattern characterises rather women above age 30.

Table 1. Union status at first birth, by age at first birth (%)

	Age at first birth					Total
	14-19	**20-24**	**25-29**	**30-34**	**35-39**	
First child born…						
Before 1st partnership	9.79	4.70	1.75	1.58	2.30	4.73
Within first cohabitation	12.82	5.02	2.95	4.73	4.60	5.96
within 8 months	2.59	0.88	0.18	0.32	0.00	0.98
after 8 months	10.24	4.15	2.77	4.42	4.60	4.97
Within first marriage	73.57	86.33	89.76	85.80	85.06	84.71
within 8 months	14.40	9.33	5.90	5.05	4.60	9.13
after 8 months	59.17	77.00	83.86	80.76	80.46	75.58
Subsequent to 1st partnership	3.82	3.95	5.54	7.89	8.05	4.60
Number of women in the sample	889	2509	1084	317	87	4886

Source: Generations and Gender Survey 2005, author's calculations

We now turn our attention to the share of women who have experienced a first birth by a certain age, and we distinguish the births by the type of union they have occurred in. We present the situation comparatively for urban and rural areas, for younger and older cohorts and for each level of women's education. As mentioned before, we treat the possible transitions from childlessness as three competing risks: having a birth within marriage, within cohabitation or as single mother.

From Figures 1.a. and 1.b. we see that 70% of women who spent their childhood in urban areas have had a first marital birth by the age 40, while the share is above 75% for women that lived in rural areas. The transition to the first marital birth happened at a slower pace in urban areas: the median age here is around 160 months since age 14 (i.e. around age 27), while the median age in rural areas is around 125 months since age 14 (i.e. around age 24). Another difference between the two types of residency is the higher incidence of nonmarital births due to single mothers in rural areas.

Figure 1.a. Share of women who have experienced a first birth, by age, urban residency during childhood

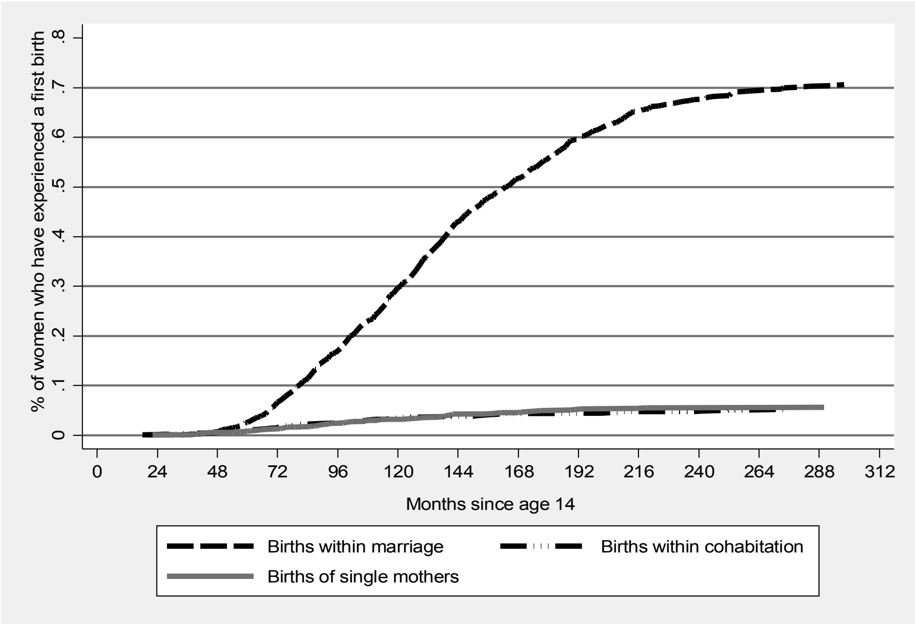
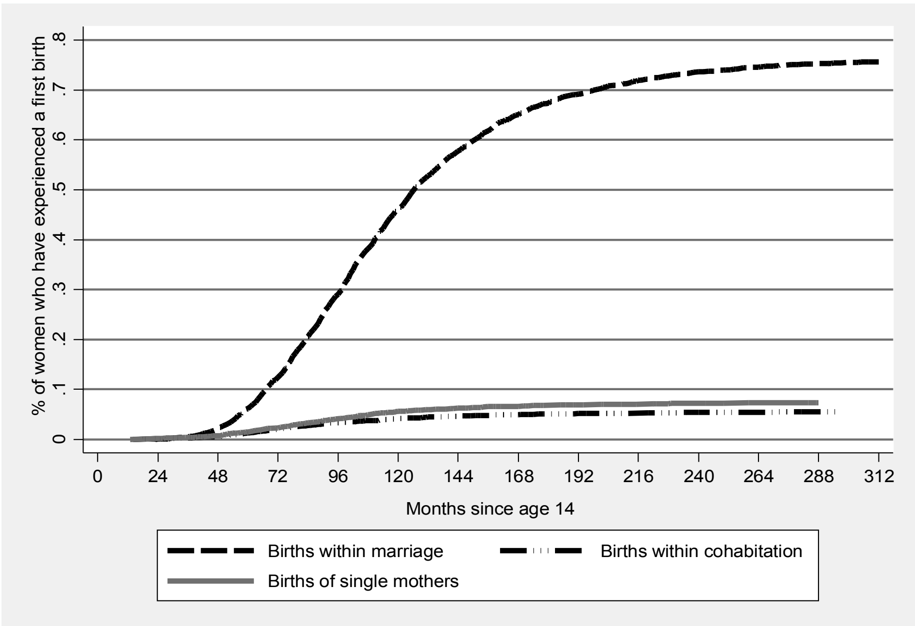


Figure 1.b. Share of women who have experienced a first birth, by age, rural residency during childhood



We choose next to differentiate women's behaviour by cohort (Figures 2.a. and 2.b. We present the situation only for oldest women, born before 1950, who spent their fertile period during the communist regime, and for the youngest ones, born after 1970, who spent most of their fertile period after the change of the political regime. There are slight differences in the transition to first marital birth, mainly concerning the pace. The visible differences concern births outside the marriage: for oldest women, these were mainly in form of single mothers, with very few births within cohabitation, while for youngest women the situation is reversed: births within cohabitation are more prevalent than births of single mothers. This may be a sign that younger women go closer to the behaviour characteristic of the second demographic transition.

We next look at the situation by women's final educational attainment, as registered at the moment of the interview. We draw the attention again on the issue of using the level of education recorded at the moment of the interview as an explanatory variable and on the trap of the anticipatory analysis, as discussed before in this article. In this part of the descriptive analysis we do not make causal inferences; we just want to see the association of the first nonmarital childbearing with the women's education level.

Figure 2.a. Share of women who have experienced a first birth, by age, cohort <1950

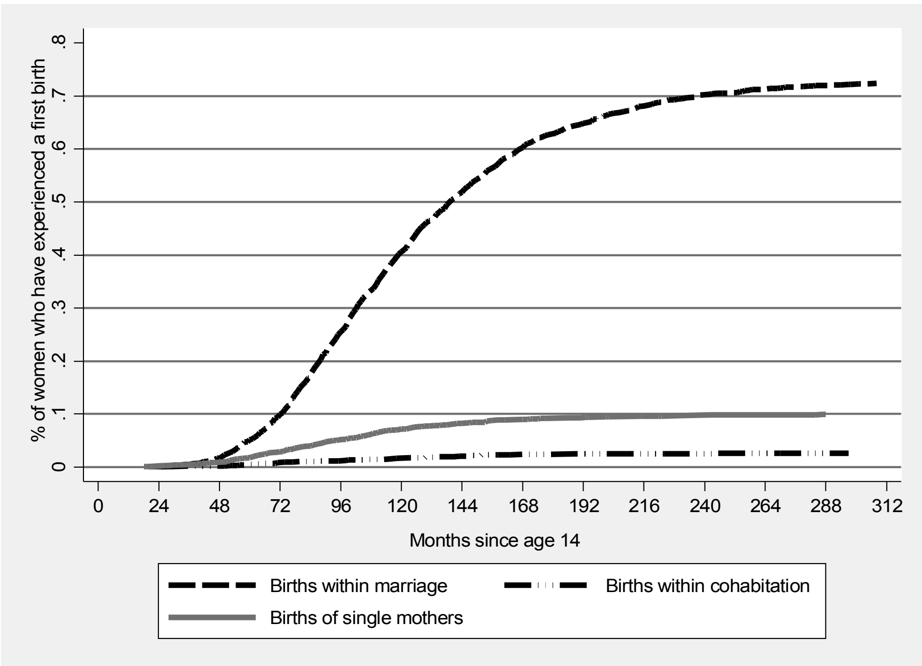


Figure 2.b. Share of women who have experienced a first birth, by age, cohort ≥1970

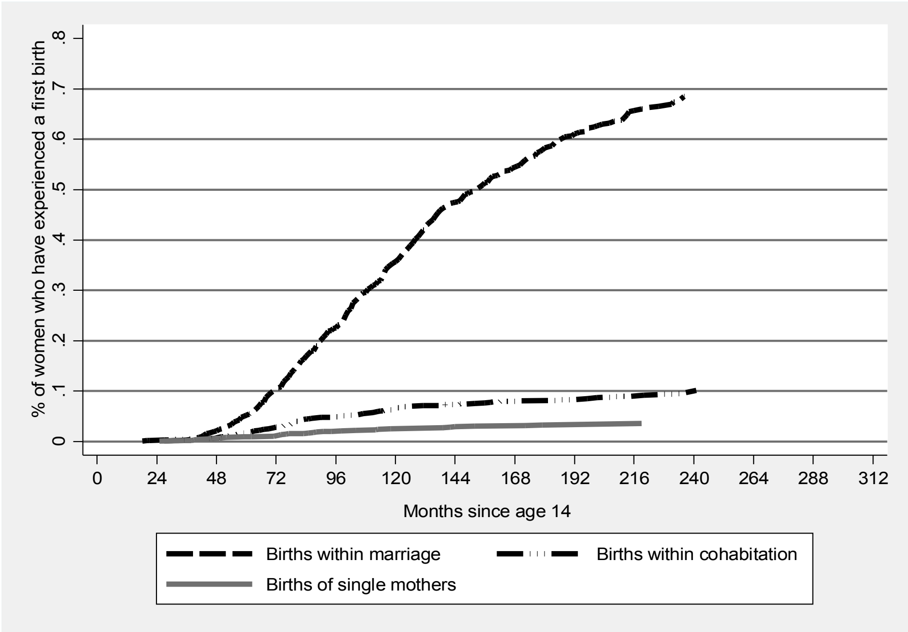


Figure 3.a. Share of women who have experienced a first birth, by age, low education at the moment of the interview

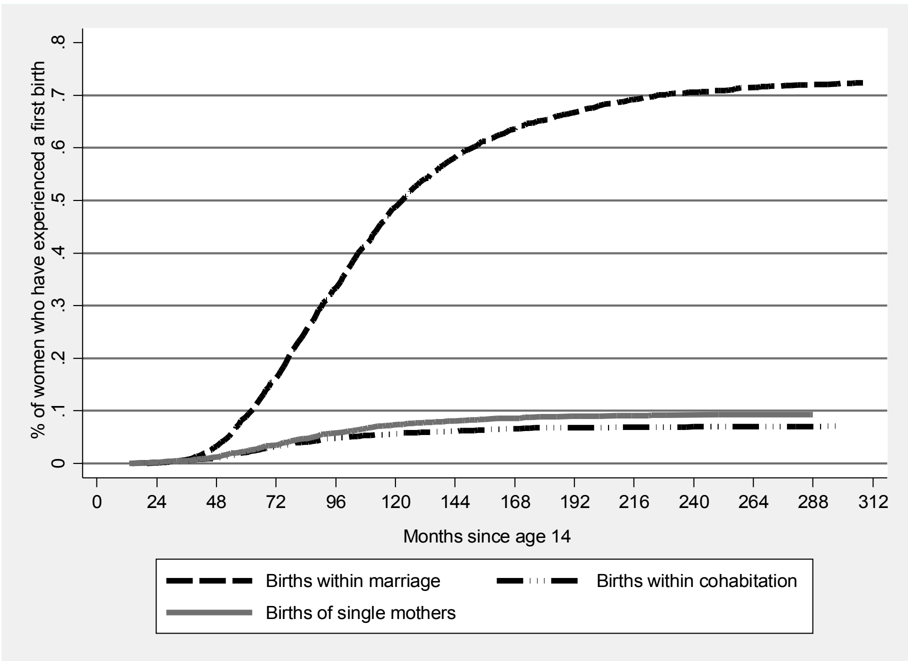


Figure 3.b. Share of women who have experienced a first birth, by age, medium education at the moment of the interview

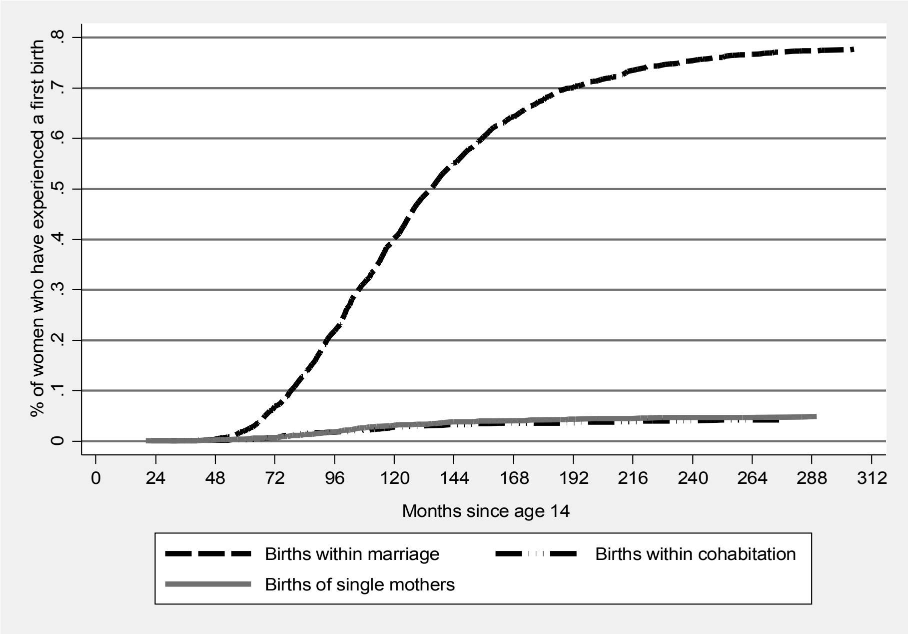
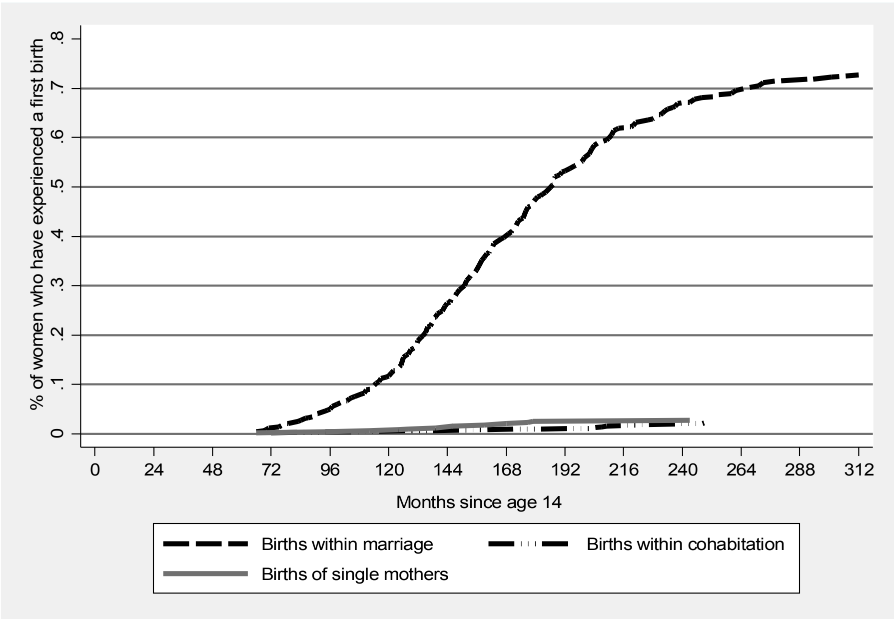


Figure 3.c. Share of women who have experienced a first birth, by age, high education at the moment of the interview



We notice from Figures 3.a., 3.b. and 3.c. that women who have high education started the transition to motherhood later than less educated women. The share of women who have had a marital birth by age 40 is quite similar for all three levels of education (between 70% and 80%), but the differences are in the pace of the transition: median age for high educated women is around 190 months since age 14 (i.e. almost age 30), while the median age for the other women is around 125-130 months since age 40 (i.e. around age 24-25). Another most visible difference is connected with the births outside marriage: their prevalence is highest for low educated women, and the lowest for high educated women. This may be a sign that nonmarital childbearing in Romania is not an expression of the second demographic transition. We will have more insight into this issue by the multivariate analysis.

4.2. Multivariate analysis

The risk[3] of first nonmarital birth is highest for age group 20-24. In what the effects of covariates are concerned, in the first model we introduced covariates related with the pattern of disadvantage. These are the background characteristics, which describe the context where the women were raised. As we expected, we find that more disadvantageous contexts favour childbearing outside marriage. Not living with both parents during childhood increase the risks of having a nonmarital birth by 47%, growing up in a large family (with more than three siblings) raises the risk by 27%, while being of Roma ethnicity inflates the risk by 4.67 times. Having a better educated mother protects the woman to have a birth outside marriage, by sharply reducing the risks. Regarding cohort, the younger the women the greater the risk of childbearing outside marriage. Results from this first model sustain the hypothesis of nonmarital childbearing as a pattern of disadvantage. The effect of the cohort is not enough for us to speak of manifestations of the second demographic transition.

In Model 2 we introduce two personal characteristics: the current educational attainment (a time-varying covariate) and religiosity. As expected, education enrolment and childbearing are not compatible. The most interesting result is that having medium or high education strongly reduces the risk of nonmarital childbearing: women with medium education (upper-secondary and post-secondary non-tertiary) have 40% lower risks of becoming unmarried mothers, while for high educated women (tertiary education) the risk is reduced by 60%. These results are clear indications that nonmarital childbearing is not an expression of the second demographic transition, since it is associated with low

3 Absolute risks or the occurrence-exposure rates of the event (number of events/(population under risk x duration of exposure to the risk)).

education. The effect of respondent's religiosity, on the other hand, indicates that more secularized women are those more prone to childbearing outside marriage, which corresponds with the characteristics of the second demographic transition. The effect of the covariate accounting for the cohort becomes stronger, indicating that younger women are more prone to the behaviour under study.

Table 2. Results from event history model, relative risks of the transition to first nonmarital birth

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
Age								
14-19 years	0.00030		0.00060		0.00069		0.00050	
20-24 years	0.00087		0.00148		0.00165		0.00071	
25-29 years	0.00062		0.00101		0.00110		0.00037	
30-34 years	0.00038		0.00062		0.00066		0.00020	
35-39 years	0.00015		0.00024		0.00025		0.00007	
Residency during childhood								
Urban	1							
Rural	1.14							
Living arrangement during childhood								
With both parents	1		1		1		1	
Not with both parents	1.47	**	1.52	***	1.53	***	1.40	***
Number of siblings								
Less than three siblings	1		1		1		1	
Three or more siblings	1.27	***	1.13		1.13		1.11	
Roma ethnicity								
Not Roma	1		1		1		1	
Roma	4.67	***	3.05	***	3.41	***	3.23	***
Mother's education								
Not specified	1.12		1.12					
Low education	1		1					
Medium education	0.53	***	0.75	*				
High education	0.32	**	0.59					
Father's occupation								
Not specified	1.50							
Professionals	1							
Clerks/services	1.17							
Workers	1.35							
Agriculture	1.16							
Cohort								
Before 1950	1		1					
1950-1969	1.17	*	1.43	***				
After 1970	1.32	**	1.60	***				

Religiosity						
Not religious	1.31	***	1.36	***	1.36	***
Religious	1		1		1	
Current educational attainment						
Enrolled in education	0.17	***	0.17	***	0.19	***
Low education	1		1		1	
Medium education	0.60	***	0.64	***	0.66	***
High education	0.40	***	0.37	***	0.40	***
Calendar period						
Before 1990			1		1	
After 1989			1.22	**	1.12	
Partnership status						
Single					1	
In cohabitation					2.16	***
Residence with parents						
Still in parental home					1	
Left parental home					1.86	***

Note: *** significant at 1% level; ** significant at 5% level; * significant at 10% level.

In Model 3 we add the covariate calendar period and we see that the risks of nonmarital childbearing are 22% higher after the change of the political regime. In the final model we introduce another two time-varying covariates: partnership status at the moment of birth and whether the respondent was still living with her parents at that moment or had already left the parental home. The effects of other covariates such as whether she lived with both parents during childhood, Roma ethnicity, religiosity and current educational attainment do not change. Having a coresident partner doubles the risks of childbearing, and having already left the parental home increases it by 86%. This is not surprising, since women leave their parental home usually when they enter a couple relationship.

5. Conclusions

We have investigated the nonmarital childbearing behaviour in Romania, with the aim to see whether it is an expression of the second demographic transition or it is a pattern of disadvantage. Our results are in line with those of Rotariu (2009), who concludes that nonmarital births in Romania are not a symptom of the transition to a value system characteristic to post-modernity or late modernity. Women with post-modern value orientation, economically active and professionals are unlikely to give birth outside marriage. In contrast, if we speak of first births, women who have not ended compulsory education level, economically inactive, that are very young, are prone to this type of behaviour (Rotariu 2009).

The merit of our study is that it is not cross-sectional, but approaches the topic from a life course perspective. We considered the possible transitions from childlessness as competing risks, looking at the shares of women who have experienced a first birth by a certain age, and we distinguished the births by the type of union they have occurred in. In this way we were able to see what type of nonmarital childbearing (in cohabitation or as single mothers) is more spread in our country. Compared with previous work on this topic about Romania, we contributed with the multivariate analysis, investigating the influence of different background factors and personal characteristics on childbearing outside marriage.

We are now able to offer some answers to our initial questions. Our analysis showed that nonmarital childbearing in form of births of single mothers is more spread, but for younger generations the case is other way around, with childbearing within cohabitation being more spread. The results of the multivariate analysis show that childbearing outside marriage in Romania is a pattern of disadvantage, since disadvantageous childhood context (not living with both parents, growing up in a large family and having a low educated mother), being of Roma ethnicity and having a low personal level of education favour this behaviour. However, we have found evidence that secularized and young women are more prone to nonmarital childbearing, influences that are in connection with the characteristics of the second demographic transition. We believe that instead of considering the two possible explanations as mutually exclusive, we may see them as complementary and accept that nonmarital childbearing as an expression of the second demographic transition is slowly spreading, but the nonmarital childbearing as pattern of disadvantage is still predominant.

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Perceptions des jeunes étudiants concernant le vieillissement démographique et les personnes âgées en Roumanie

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Abstract: The succession of the generations is taking place in very different economic, demographic and political contexts, specific for each period. In Romania, the generations of 50 years and more have spent most of their lives under the communist regime. All their moral and social values, their conceptions, attitudes and perceptions are profoundly marked by the ideology of the communist period. On the contrary, the generations who have reached their twenties starting with 2006-2008 have new values, attitudes and perceptions, frequently very different from those of their parents and grandparents. These generations will become the active adults by 2015 and will have to sustain the elderly in a difficult context of rising dependency ratios. This will be the most obvious consequence of the Romanian population ageing, which has strongly accelerated starting with 1990, because of significant migration, a severe decrease in fertility and recently, the increase in life expectancy. In this context, the question raised is how the young people today see their relationship with the elderly. For the ones already retired, is it rather the state or the family (thus the adults and the young) who will help them? How do the young people see the role of the elderly in the society and what are the values transmitted from one generation to the other? The answers to these questions and others regarding this issue were obtained with the help of a survey developed in 2008 on a sample of 2324 respondent students (aged 19-21 years) from various universities in Bucharest.

Keywords: ageing, young people, intergenerational relationship, pension funding, aged people, family.

1. Introduction

Dans chaque population la succession des générations se passe sur des contextes économiques, démographiques et politiques très différents, selon l'époque (Baccaïni et Gani 1997). En Roumanie, les générations ayant plus de 50 ans ont vécu la plupart de leur vie dans le régime communiste. Toutes leurs valeurs morales, sociales, toutes les conceptions, attitudes et perceptions sont profondément marquées par cette époque de l'idéologie communiste.

Par contre, les générations ayant atteint leur vingtième anniversaire à partir de 2006-2008, elles ont des nouvelles valeurs, attitudes et perceptions, fréquemment très différentes de leurs parents et grand parents. Le contexte politique, économique, démographique et culturel est totalement changé. Ces générations deviendront les adultes actifs d'ici 2015 qui vont soutenir les aînés dans un contexte difficile de forte hausse des taux de dépendance.

Il s'agit des conséquences économiques et sociales actuelles et futures qui découlent des évolutions démographiques tout à fait divergentes, développées en deux époques différentes.

Premièrement, en Roumanie le baby-boom s'est produit avec une décennie de retard qu'en Occident, étant provoqué par la politique nataliste coercitive, imposée par le régime communiste.

Deuxièmement, la chute de l'ancien régime a engendré la libération de l'avortement et de la contraception et l'ouverture du pays vers le monde. Les conséquences - l'effondrement de la natalité, la forte émigration et, récemment, l'augmentation de l'espérance de vie, sont des évolutions démographique qui ont reconfigurée le tableau général de la population roumaine.

En fin de compte, la proportion de la population âgée (de 65 ans et plus) est passée de 10,3% en 1990 à 14,9 % en 2008 et atteindra environ 20% en 2030. Par conséquence, le taux de dépendance des personnes âgées c'est accru de158 vieux pour 1000 adultes (15-64 ans) en 1990 à 213 vieux pour 100 adultes en 2008. Le baby-boom des années 1967-1970 deviendra le papy-boom à partir de l'an 2032, avec des implications lourdes pour les générations adultes, peu nombreuses nées âpres 1990. Inévitablement, ces évolutions demandent et demanderont l'augmentation des dépenses publiques de santé, de soins de longue durée et de retraite, au détriment des dépenses d'éducation et de formation des jeunes, de création d'emploi etc. Surtout quand il s'agit des lois roumaines en matière de la retraite anticipée. Dans les années 90 maintes d'exceptions de la loi ont été approuvées, afin de privilégier certaines catégories socioprofessionnelles. Ce qui alourdisse déjà énormément, les charges des personnes adultes actives et du budget d'assurance sociale.

En Roumanie, comme dans l'ensemble de l'Union Européenne, la crise financière, celle de l'emploi et celle de la protection sociale qui l'accompagnent donnent une plus grande actualité aux solidarités familiales et à la circulation des échanges hors du ménage, avec d'autres membres de la parentèle. C'est similaire aux autres pays européens, comme par exemple la France (Wolff et Attias-Donfut

2007)[1]. Les échanges entre générations sont de nature très diverse et leur composition varie en fonction des âges de la vie, selon les besoins des bénéficiaires. Mais l'expression des solidarités familiales dépend aussi des ressources et des normes propres à chaque milieu social.

Comme la plupart des conflits sociaux gravitent autour des relations intergénérationnelles et des événements familiaux, il pourrait aussi se développer des attitudes de « gérontophobie » (Baccaïni et Gani 1997, apud Dooghe 1989). La croissance de la durée de vie, la baisse de la natalité et l'accélération du vieillissement démographique ont abouti en « plusieurs années de cohabitation » des jeunes et des vieux et alors on peut raisonner en termes de *solidarité ou de concurrence intergénérationnelle*. Dans ce contexte, il est plus que nécessaire d'avoir d' informations sur les perceptions des jeunes générations à l'égard du vieillissement et des vieux.

Malgré les possibles tensions intergénérationnelles sur le partage des ressources, on ne doit pas oublier que chacun d'entre jeunes peut être concernée par des relations aux parents âgés, parfois, même impliqués dans les problèmes familiaux que pose leur prise en charge. Ainsi, il este fort intéressant de s'interroger sur ce que savent les jeunes étudiants de la capitale de la Roumanie du vieillissement et de connaître leurs attitudes et valeurs morales, culturelles et religieuses, leurs opinions sur les relations intergénérationnelles. Surtout qu'il s'agit des jeunes plus instruits, plus informés, qui accomplissent leurs études dans la capitale du pays, dont la population a de comportements et conceptions de vie plus modernes que le reste du pays. On ne peut que penser avec Baccaïni et Gani : *« ... dans la mesure où les représentations que des groupes de la population se font de certaines réalités peuvent, sur le long terme, influer sur la manière dont ces réalités seront finalement prises en compte, en termes politiques et sociaux »* (Bacaïni et Gani 1997: 1084).

2. Quelques aspects techniques et méthodologiques de l'enquête

Les réponses à ces questions sont été obtenus à travers une enquête menée en 2008, auprès 2324 de répondeurs étudiants (de 19-21 ans) appartenant à divers universités de Bucarest. Le but de l'enquête porte sur les relations intergénérationnelles dans le contexte d'un vieillissement accéléré en Roumanie. Le questionnaire de l'enquête sur les perceptions des jeunes étudiants roumains a été conçu par les membres de l'équipe de recherche qui sont de spécialistes du Centre d'Enquêtes et des Sondages de l'Académie d'Etudes Economiques de Bucarest, département Statistique et Econométrie. On a formulé au total 37 questions, dont

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[1] D'après les données issues de l'enquête *Share* menée auprès de personnes de 50 ans et plus, près de trois enquêtés sur dix sont concernés par des transferts financiers au cours de l'année et plus de quatre sur dix par des aides en temps.

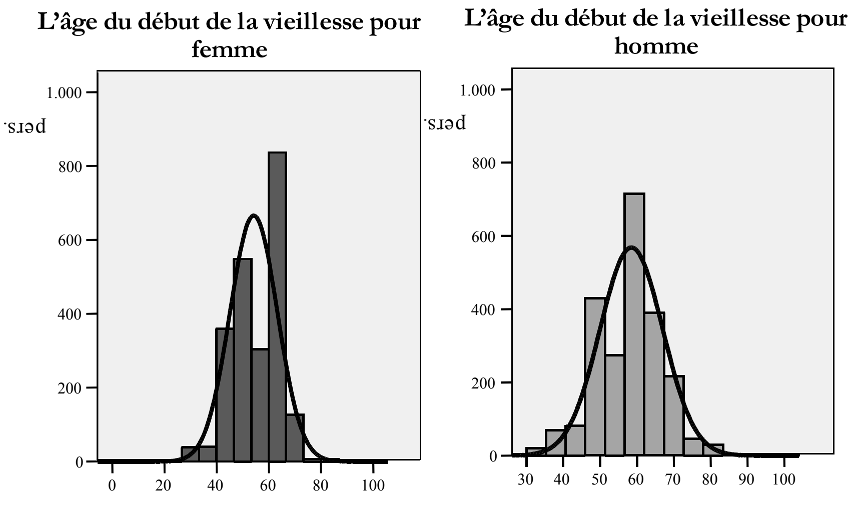
27 questions portent sur la thématique précisée et dix questions visent les variables démographiques et socioculturelles du répondeur.

L'échantillon a été construit par échantillonnage dirigé. Dans un premier temps, selon le principe de proportionnalité, on en a inclue des étudiants de tous les établissements d'enseignement supérieur de Bucarest. Dans un deuxième temps la sélection a été faite par la méthode de quotas par rapport à deux critères: l'année d'études et le genre. Ainsi, l'échantillon compte 45% étudiants de sexe masculin et 55% de sexe féminin, y compris de niveau licence, master et doctorat. En fin de compte, on a eu des répondeurs en proportion de: 24% étudiants de la première année du cycle de licence, 40% de la deuxième année, 23% de la troisième année et le reste - de la quatrième année, master et doctorat

3. Perception de la vieillesse et du vieillissement

Tout d'abord on s'intéresse aux perceptions que les étudiants répondeurs aient de la vieillesse, tant pour les femmes, que pour les hommes.

Figure 1. Perceptions des étudiants à propos de l'âge du début de la vieillesse

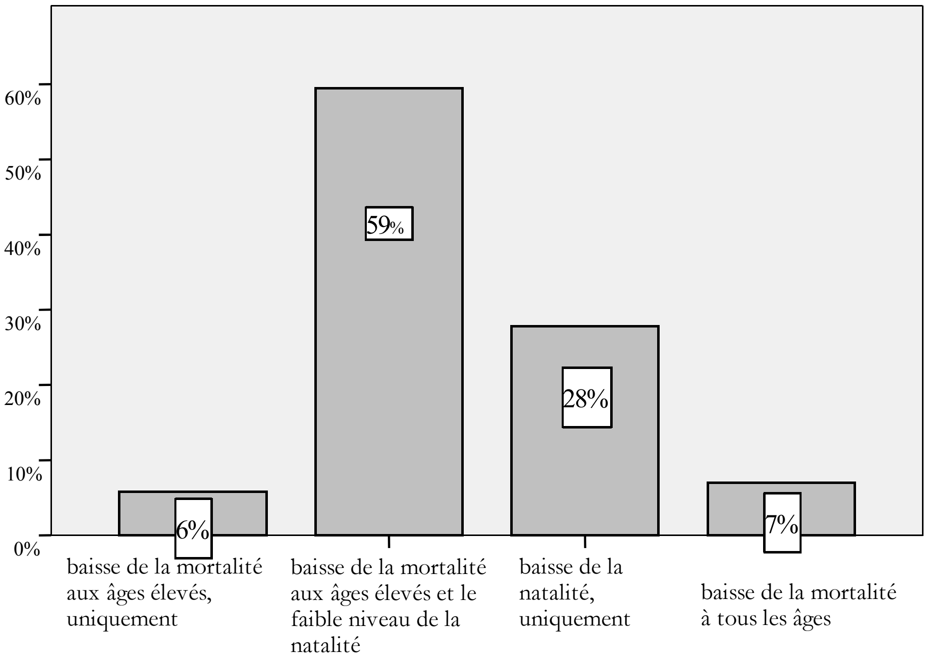


Ainsi, l'âge considéré comme début de la vieillesse favorise les hommes, par rapport aux femmes. A 54,26 ans une femme est perçue comme vieille, mais l'homme « commence à être vieux » plus tard - à 58,49 ans (fig.1). La différence des perceptions de la vieillesse pour les deux sexes a signifiance statistique pour une probabilité approchant l'unité.

On peut alors s'interroger s'il y en a des écarts significatifs, selon le sexe du répondeur. La réponse est oui. Si les étudiantes considèrent que la vieillesse commence à 55,4 ans pour les femmes et à 59,04 ans pour les hommes, les étudiants estiment qu'il s'agit des âges plus bas – 52,81 ans, voire 57,8 ans. (Les valeurs du test de « Student par paires» sont 25,081 pour les répondeurs masculins, voire 24,5 pour les répondeurs féminins. En conséquence, les différences mentionnées ont une signifiance statistique pour des probabilités presque maximes (voire 1)).

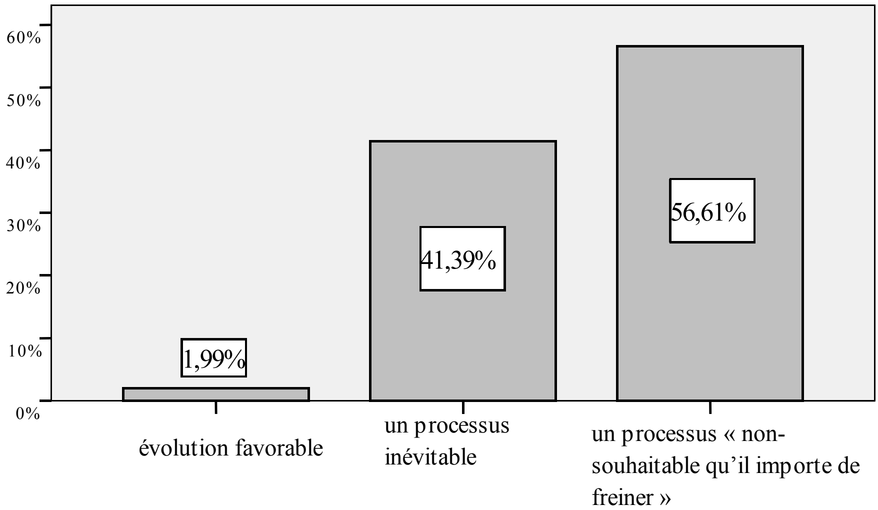
Les répondeurs semblent avoir, pour une large majorité d'entre eux, une assez bonne connaissance des causes du vieillissement démographique en Roumanie. Ainsi, 59% du total indiquent bien que la baisse de la mortalité aux âges élevés et le faible niveau de la natalité sont à l' origine de ce processus (fig.2).

Figure 2. Les causes du vieillissement démographique en Roumanie



La plupart des étudiants répondeurs (56,61%) considèrent que le vieillissement de la population roumaine relève d'un processus « non-souhaitable qu'il importe de freiner » et 41,39% estiment qu'il s'agit d'un processus inévitable (fig.3). Parmi les étudiants qui pensent que le vieillissement est un processus non-souhaitable plus de 60% ont indiquée la bonne réponse en ce qui concerne ses causes. Ces répondeurs disposent de représentations surtout négatifs sur le vieillissement.

Figure 3. Les opinions sur le vieillissement démographique en Roumanie



4. Les opinions des jeunes concernant les retraites et la place des vieux sur le marché du travail

Les perceptions des étudiants à l'égard des vieux ont été étudiées à partir de 4 questions de l'enquête, traitant de la place des vieux sur le marché du travail et du financement de la retraite, du rôle de la famille et de la société pour leur prise en charge.

Quant aux relations entre générations sur le marché du travail, les représentations des étudiants sont tout à fait contradictoires (fig.4).

D'une part, 56% des étudiants sont favorable pour que les personnes âgées puissent cumuler la retraite avec le salaire et 92% des répondeurs sont d'accord et tout à fait d'accord pour que la population de 65 ans et plus jouissent des mêmes droits que les jeunes et les adultes sur le marché du travail.

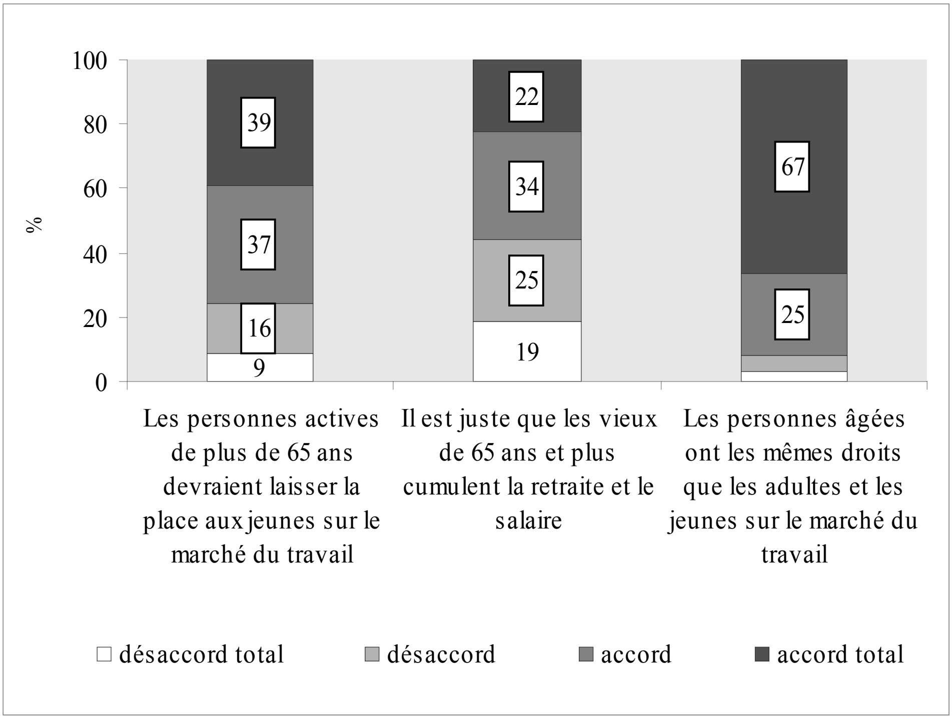
D'autre part, on s'aperçoit que la plupart des répondeurs (76%) sont défavorables à la partition du marché du travail avec les personnes actives de plus de 65 ans.

Une sorte d'hypocrisie ? Plutôt une sorte d'immaturité ressortant de leur propre mode de vie, de leurs valeurs et leurs attitudes dans cette époque de la vie, y compris la crainte de la concurrence future des personnes âgées sur le marché du travail. Ces contradictions tiennent souvent de la déclaration de principe. La plupart de répondeurs (plus de 51%) ne sont pas de personnes actives, 34% travaillaient à temps partiel ou occasionnel et seulement 14% ont déclaré avoir un travail à plein-temps.

Alors, pour la majorité des répondeurs, leurs études constituent la partie la plus importante de leurs préoccupations et de leurs soucis. La famille, souvent, même leurs grands parents, qui sont de personnes âgées, les offrent d'aides financières pour la subsistance, le logement et les études. Il s'agit d'une part des transferts financiers intergénérationnels des vieux vers les jeunes.

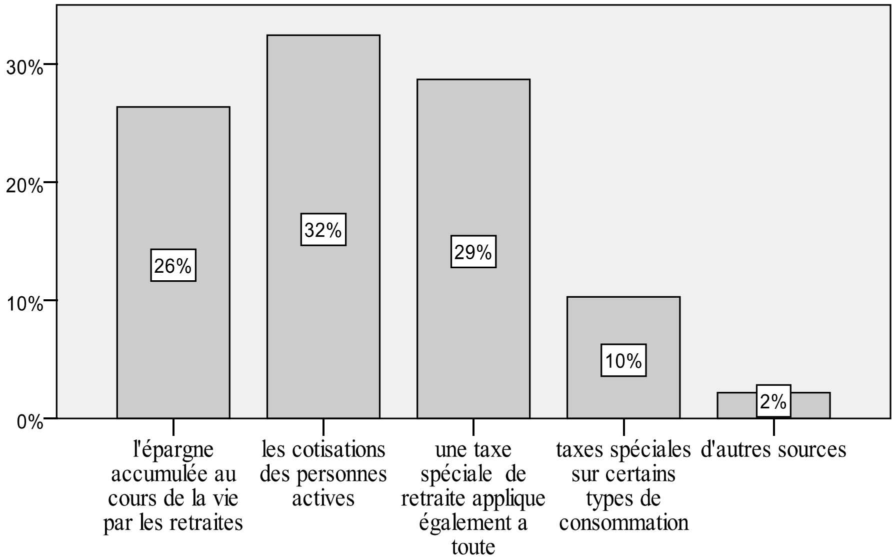
Du point de vue statistique, on n'a pas trouvé des relations significatives, entre cette variable et d'autres caractéristiques de la base de données (milieu de résidence, le revenu, le sexe, nationalité, confession etc.).

Figure 4. La place des personnes âgées sur le marché du travail



En ce qui concerne le mode de financement des retraites, les étudiants ont des opinions assez différentes (fig.5). Si 32% d'entre eux sont conservateurs, car ils voient le financement des retraites étant assurée par les cotisations des personnes actives proportionnellement à leur revenu, prés de 39% sont des partisans des nouvelles solutions, soit un impôt spécial retraite, prélevé de manière égale sur toute la population, respectivement des prélèvements sur certaines consommations (essence, alcool, tabac, etc). Les derniers, soit 26%, considèrent que l'épargne accumulée au cours de la vie par les personnes elles-mêmes, devraient assurer le financement des retraites. Ces positions ne sont pas fortement liées, avec signifiance statistique, avec aucune autre variable enregistrées sur le questionnaire.

Figure 5. Les opinions sur le financement de la retraite



5. Les perceptions des étudiants sur le rôle des vieux dans la famille et sur la solidarité intergénérationnelle

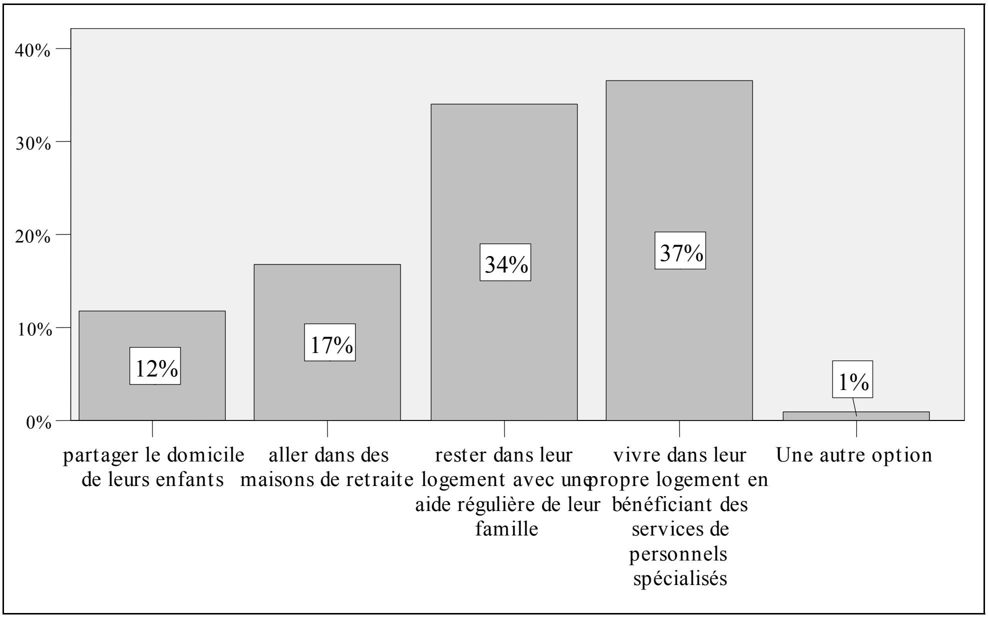
Les attitudes de solidarité ou non-solidarité des jeunes envers leurs aînés, relèvent quelques prises de position intéressantes (fig.6).

La plupart (71%) d'étudiants répondeurs s'expriment en faveur du maintien des personnes âgées dépendantes à domicile avec une aide régulière de leur famille (34%) ou en bénéficiant des services de personnels spécialisés (médical, ménager, social) - 37%.

En revanche, il y a les deux extrêmes. D'une part - 17% d'entre eux pensent qu'il convient de les placer dans une maison de retraite et de l'autre part - 12% d'étudiants considèrent que les personnes âgées dépendantes doivent partager le domicile de leurs enfants.

En effet, la majorité d'étudiants pensent que la possibilité d'un maintien à domicile des personnes âgées dépendantes est la meilleure solution, à travers les services médicaux et sociaux appropriés. C'est une affirmation de la perception de l'entraide familiale existante ou potentielle, une expression de la solidarité entre générations dans la famille, communauté et société en Roumanie.

Figure 6. Les opinions sur la prise en charge des personnes âgées dépendantes



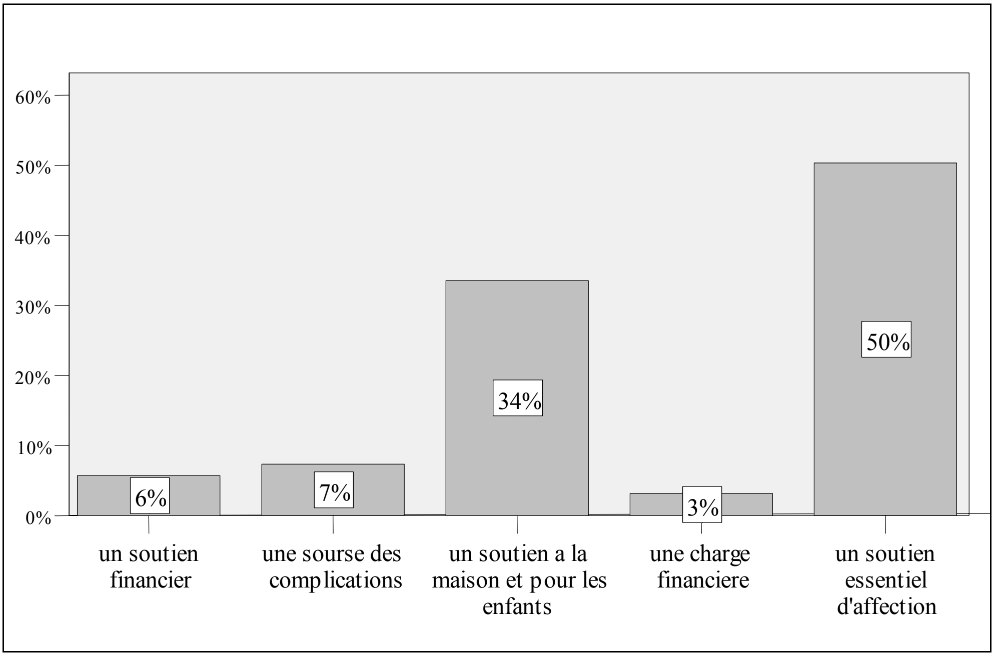
Les représentations d'étudiants par rapport au rôle des vieux pour la famille et pour eux-mêmes témoignent des valeurs de la solidarité envers les aînés (fig.7).

Ainsi, presque 90% du total répondeurs perçoivent favorablement les personnes âgées, d'un coté comme un soutien affectif indispensable (50%) et, de l'autre cotée plus mercantile- comme une aide en termes de services (garde et éducation des enfants, cuisine, ménage etc.) (34%), voire comme un recours en cas de problème financier (6%).

Seulement 10% d'entre eux ont de représentations négatives, qu'ils estiment les vieux ne sont qu'une charge financière lourde à supporter (3%) ou une source de complications (7%) (fig.7).

Ces réponses s'expliquent par le fait que les répondeurs sont, en général, des jeunes qui n'ont pas la responsabilité du cout de la vie du ménage et ne ressentent pas directement les implications financières de la prise en charge des personnes âgées dépendantes.

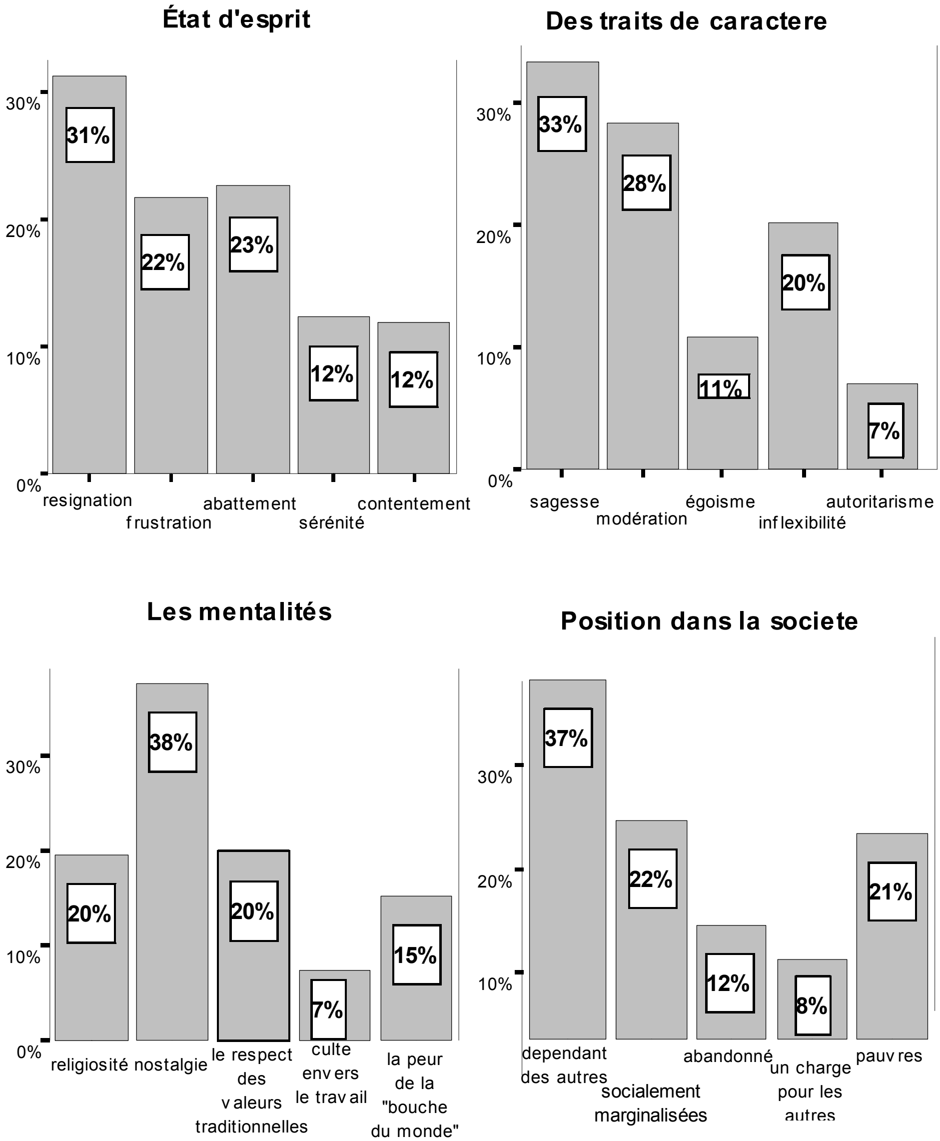
Figure 7. Le rôle des personnes âgées au sein de la famille



Dans ce contexte il importe d'essayer faire le portrait de la personne roumaine âgée, telle qu'elle est perçue par les étudiants. Ils ont répondu aux quelques questions visant les vieux et leurs traits de caractère, état d'esprit, mentalités et position dans la société (fig.8).

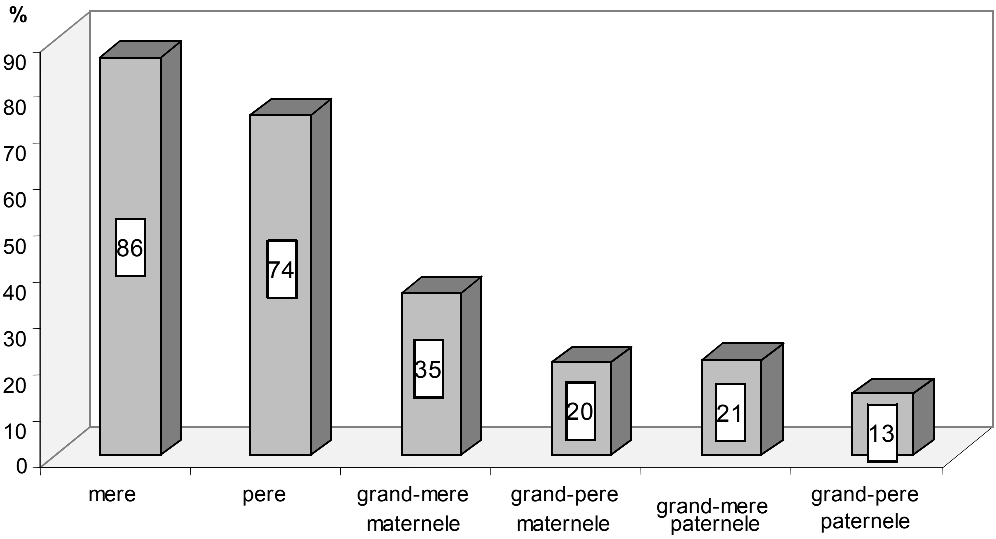
Les résultats dégagent des représentations quasiment sombres, grises. La majorité des personnes âgées apparaissent d'une part comme résignées, frustrées et déprimées, inflexibles, dépendantes d'autres, nostalgiques de l'ancien régime (communiste), pauvres et, donc, marginalisées du point de vue social. D'autre part, les enquêtés admettent que les personnes vieille sont plus sages, économes, religieuses, avec une propension accentuée au travail et au devoir, en respect profond vers les valeurs traditionnelles (fig.8).

Figure 8. Les perceptions des étudiants a l'égard des traits de caractère, mentalités, état d'esprit et position dans la société



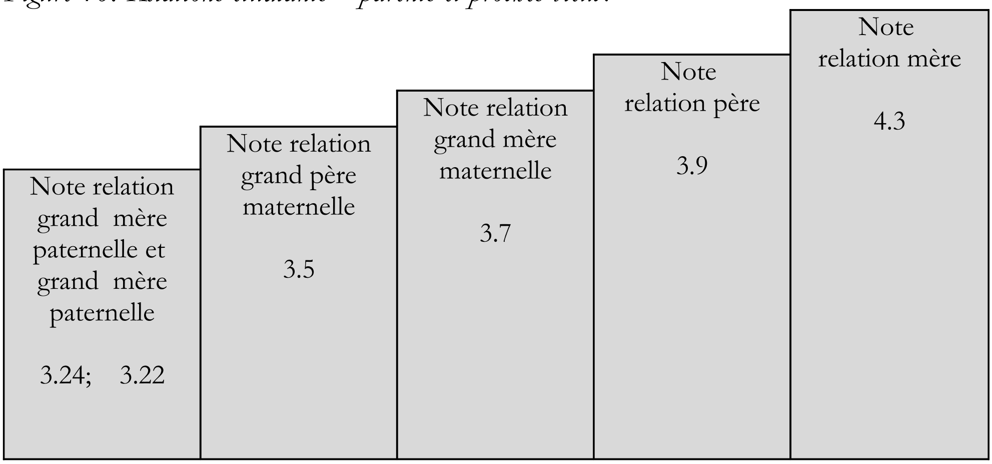
En tout état de cause, ces perceptions des étudiants roumains sont indubitablement liées aux transferts intergénérationnels d'affectivité et de temps, pendant les premiers 6-7 ans de la vie (fig.9). Ainsi, la plupart des enquêtés ont déclaré que, outre la mère et le père, surtout les grands-parents maternelle (56%) se sont impliquées dans leur garde et éducation durant l'enfance.

Figure 9. Implications de grand parents comme garde-enfant et éducations en enfance des enquêtés



Les scores accordés aux relations avec les parents ou grand parents nous ont conduits au classement suivant (fig. 10).

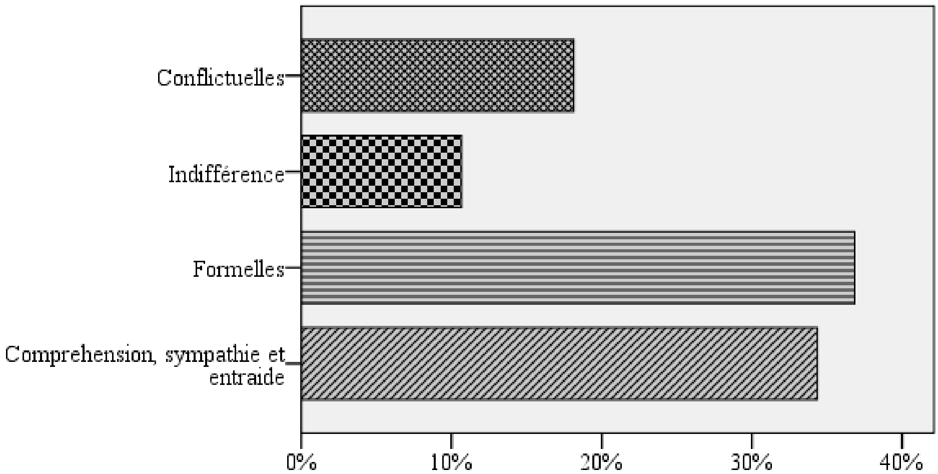
Figure 10. Relations étudiants – parents et proches vieux



Apres avoir testé la signifiance des différences entre les scores, par le test de Student pour échantillonnes dépendantes on a constaté que la relation avec la mère est la plus apprécié (score 4.3). Des scores excédant la moyenne de 3.5 se sont obtenus pour la relation avec le père (3.9) et avec la grand-mère maternelle. On constate le maintien des valeurs encore traditionnelles aux jeunes étudiantes, du fait que dans la société roumaine le phénomène de grandir avec un seul parent n'est pas assez répandu comme dans l'Europe de l'Ouest, voire dans la France (Chardon et Daguet 2009).

Vue ce contexte, on peut aller plus loin et se demander sur les perceptions générales ressenties directement par les étudiants à l'égard des générations vieilles (fig.11).

Figure 11. Perception des étudiants concernant le type de relation entre eux et les générations vieilles



La plupart d'enquêtés perçoivent l'ensemble des relations avec leurs parents âgés d'une manière contradictoires (fig.11). D'une part - 37% des étudiants pensent que leurs relations avec les ainés sont superficielles et formelles et 11% d'indifférence. De l'autre part, 34% estiment que sont des relations de compréhension, de sympathie et d'entraide. Il reste un pourcentage de 18% qui caractérisent les relations comme conflictuelles.

Alors, environ 66% des étudiants ressentent les relations avec les générations vieilles comme des relations à connotation négative. Les explications possibles de ces réponses tiennent du changement profond de la société, de la réalité sociale, politique et économique pendant les deux dernières décennies. Vue ce changement radical, les jeunes et les vieilles générations se retrouvent dissemblables, avec des modes de vie et des expectations divergentes. Ainsi, la communication intergénérationnelle devienne très difficile, surtout que cet éloignement est désiré par les jeune, comme une forte affirmation d'option pour l'idée de changement, reformes, développement et progrès des jeunes générations (Ionescu et Bunescu 2007).

6. Une estimation statistique des relations entre les jeunes et les vieilles générations

Les opinions des répondeurs concernant le type de relation entre les jeunes et les vieilles générations varient selon leurs caractéristiques sociodémographiques et culturelles.

La méthode de la régression logistique permet de distinguer les effets propres des différentes variables sur les opinions des étudiants.

La variable expliquée dichotomique est «Entre les jeunes et les vieilles générations il y a des relations de compréhension, sympathie et entraide», avec les deux variantes de réponse :

0 NON	Entre les jeunes et les vieilles générations il y a des relations formelles, conflictuelles et d'indifférence
1 OUI	Entre les jeunes et les vieilles générations il y a des relations harmonieuses, de compréhension, sympathie et entraide

Le modèle contienne deux variables explicatives catégoriales – *le genre* et *la pratique de la religion* et quatre variables numériques, à savoir : 1. *le score accordé sur une échelle de 1 à 10 à la relation du répondeur avec sa mère*, 2. *les notes associées* à *l'importance de l'argent*, 3. *les études*, 4. *le soin des autres*. On considère comme catégorie de référence la variable qui a le plus petit code associé. Les résultats donnent comme catégories de référence *le sexe masculin* et *le non-pratiquant de la religion*.

La validation du modèle de régression logistique est faite par le test de Hosmer et Lemeshow. Les coefficients de régression ont de la signifiance statistique, le niveau de signifiance associé du test de Wald χ^2.est moins de 0,05 pour tous les coefficients.

Les coefficients et les probabilités de l'événement considéré (la variante OUI de la variable explicitée) sont présentés dans le tableau no.3

Comment interpréter les résultats du modèle obtenu par la régression logistique ?

La première variable explicative est *la note accordée à la relation avec sa propre mère* – a une influence directe sur la variable explicitée. Ainsi, la croissance avec un point du score attribué à la relation avec la mère, multiplie par 1,17 la chance qu'entre les jeunes et les vieilles générations soient des relations de compréhension, de sympathie et d'entraide (toutes les autres variable étant contrôlées).

La deuxième variable explicative vise *le comportement religieux du répondeur*. La catégorie de référence inclue les répondeurs qui ne sont pas des pratiquants de la religion. On a obtenu une valeur trop petite pour le seuil de signifiance du test de Wald χ^2, ce qui montre que le coefficient de la variable a une signifiance statistique pour une probabilité très proche de l'unité. Alors, les répondeurs qui se sont déclarés comme de personnes religieuses ont une chance de 1,64 fois beaucoup plus grande pour considérer les relations avec les personnes âgées en termes d'harmonie, de compréhension et d'entraide.

La troisième variable explicative est *le genre*. La catégorie de référence vise les répondeurs de sexe masculin. La probabilité qu'une étudiante ait une relation de solidarité, de collaboration et d'entraide avec les générations plus âgées est de 1,46 fois plus grande qu'un étudiant (de sexe masculin).

Tableau no.1. Les variables de l'équation

	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95,0% C.I.for EXP(B)	
La relation du répondeur avec sa mère	,16	,058	7,21	1	,007	**1,17**	1,04	1,31
Pratiquant de la religion (Oui) (ref. Non)	,5	,097	26,24	1	,000	**1,64**	1,34	1,98
Sexe feminine (ref. masculin)	,38	,094	16,11	1	,000	**1,46**	1,21	1,76
L'importance de l'argent	-,07	,026	7,23	1	,007	**,93**	,89	,98
L'importance de les etudes	,07	,029	6,23	1	,013	**1,08**	1,02	1,14
L'importance du soin des autres	,06	,027	5,43	1	,020	1,07	1,01	1,12
Constant	-2,45	,392	39,20	1	,000	,09		

On a essayé de vérifier les liaisons de la variable explicitée avec les opinions de chaque répondeur concernant *les valeurs qui le guident dans sa vie*. Les répondeurs ont été invités d'attribuer des notes de 1 à 10 pour quelques valeurs existentielles (repères ou normes), précisées dans la question Q11 du questionnaire. Il s'agit de repères comme : l'argent, le travail, les études, le respect mutuel, l'honnêteté, la justice, le soin des autres, le patriotisme le respect de la tradition, l'égalité, la liberté.

Ces variables ont été introduites dans le modèle, mais on a maintenu seulement celles qui exerçaient une influence significative sur la variable explicitée. Ainsi, on a retenue l'argent, les études et le soin des autres.

Les influences de ces variables sont divergentes. Ainsi, pour ceux qui désirent l'argent le plus dans leur vie ils perçoivent comme conflictuelles ou formelles les relations avec les personnes âgées. Au contraire, ceux qui sont plus intéressés par leurs études et par le soin des autres ont de chances avec 8%, voire 7% beaucoup plus grandes pour avoir de relations d'harmonie et d'entraide avec les générations vieilles.

7. Conclusion

A travers notre enquête visant les perceptions des étudiants roumains de Bucarest sur les relations à l'égard des vieux, on a découvert une tendance d'éloignement des jeunes par rapport aux vieilles générations. C'est la conséquence du besoin ressenti par la jeune génération d'exprimer sa liberté, son indépendance et de s'écarter par rapport aux valeurs des générations vieilles, estimées comme nostalgiques et obsolètes.

L'analyse statistique de la base de données relève quelques aspects.

La majorité des répondeurs sont défavorables à la partition du marché du travail avec les personnes actives de plus de 65 ans. Mais, en ce qui concerne le rôle des aînés dans la famille, la plupart des enquêtés perçoivent favorablement les personnes âgées, comme un soutien affectif indispensable, une aide en termes de services (garde et éducation des enfants, cuisine, ménage etc.) et un recours en cas de problème financier.

Vus les changements profond de la société, de la réalité sociale, politique et économique pendant les deux dernières décennies, la communication intergénérationnelle devienne très difficile, et les jeunes ressentent les relations avec les générations vieilles comme des relations plutôt à connotation négative.

Ainsi, la majorité des personnes âgées apparaissent comme résignées, frustrées et déprimées, inflexibles, dépendantes des autres, nostalgiques de l'ancien régime (communiste), pauvres et, donc, marginalisées du point de vue social. Pourtant, les enquêtés admettent que les personnes vieille sont plus sages, économes, religieuses, avec une propension accentuée au travail et au devoir, en respect profond vers les valeurs traditionnelles.

La construction d'un modèle de régression logistique nous a offert quelques explications pour le comportement des jeunes qui perçoivent les relations avec les personnes âgées en termes d'harmonie, de compréhension et d'entraide. On a remarqué que les répondeurs de sexe féminin, voire ceux qui sont pratiquants de la religion, ceux qui sont plus intéressés par leurs études et par le soin des autres et ceux qui ont bien apprécié la relation avec leurs mères ont beaucoup plus de chances pour développer des relations favorables avec les générations plus âgées.

Les résultats obtenus relèvent le besoin des jeunes générations roumaines d'affirmer leurs valeurs, attitudes et opinions, assez divergentes par rapport aux générations plus âgées. Surtout qu'on évolue dans un contexte très bouleversé par la crise financière et par les valeurs de la modernité.

Ces résultats confirment la nécessité de concevoir en Roumanie des politiques intergénérationnelles, afin de soutenir réellement la communication et la collaboration entre les générations, en faveur du progrès économique, social et culturel durable du pays.

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Public Health in the Hârtibaciu Valley Region
Current Status, Malfunctions and Strategic Aspects

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Abstract: Public health element in Hârtibaciu Valley region - current status, malfunctions and strategic aspects. The state of health of any particular nation is a reliable measure of its level of development and culture. Following its accession to the European Union, Romania has been trying to make up for the substantial shortcomings that separate it from the more developed European states. A valid analysis of the Public Health element must be based on a series of objective indicators that accurately reflect the current state of affairs: *the presence and the number of institutions which operate in the field; the number of employees in the medical field and their level of preparation; the most widely spread diseases and their consequences (main medical indicators); the most important demographical indicators, and so on*. The situation in the region under our examination reveals strong similarities with the national average, public health-wise, as well as a number of weaknesses which most EU members have overcome. This paper is set out to thoroughly scan the public health element in the aforementioned region, and to make suggestions which could lead to significant improvement if implemented as soon as possible.

Keywords: public health, territorial development, medical staff, health infrastructure, diseases.

1. Introduction

The Hârtibaciu Valley Region, part of the Sibiu county, is made up of 13 administrative units (1 town and 12 municipalities), whose territory spreads mainly along course of the Hârtibaciu river. The region's denomination - Hârtibaciu Valley - is not entirely accurate, because the administrative units it comprises are located within the hydrographic basin of the river, hence a more appropriate name for this region would be Hârtibaciu Basin.

The present paper is the result of a thorough up-to-date examination of the main indicators that are directly relevant to the *public health element* in the region.

The examination was carried out (by the Faculty of Geography within the „Babeş-Bolyai” University) when the *strategy* for this region's *territorial development* was devised.

On the premises of the Hârtibaciu Valley, public health care is organized on three basic levels (Cocean 2004): primary health care (general practitioners' offices - individual, common, or associate; territorial infirmaries; school and company infirmaries; specialized, first degree medical offices and units, such as dental care and pharmacies); specialized ambulatory health care (the hospitals' specialized ambulatory); health care in medical units with beds (urban hospitals and medical-social units with beds).

2. *Health infrastructure*

There are 22 territorial infirmaries, 2 company infirmaries (in Agnita - the companies S.C. INCSTA S.A. and S.C. AMT S.A.) and 2 school infirmaries (in Agnita - the „A.T. Laurian” Technical High-School and no. 1 Gymnasium School) in the Hârtibaciu Valley. The territorial medical units are spread somewhat evenly (there is at least one in every municipality) and they address the primary health care needs of the whole regional and local community around them. The assessment and quantification of medical data seems to show a favorable regional situation, doubtlessly influenced by the number and territorial placement of the infirmaries.

The administrative units which hold the largest number of territorial medical and health care units are the town of Agnita (together with its composing local units - 4 infirmaries), Brădeni (1 infirmary and 2 health care units), Marpod (1 infirmary and 1 health care unit), Nocrich (3 infirmaries), Roşia (2 infirmaries and 3 health care units). All the other municipalities except Iacobeni (in Netuş village, more specifically) and Mihăileni (in Răvăşel) each have a territorial functional infirmary, placed at the center of the respective municipality.

The locations of the above health care institutions are in acceptable shape for the most part, meaning they fulfil minimum conditions needed for any primary health care process to function properly.

Besides the territorial, company and school infirmaries, there are also 8 pharmacies in the area, located in Agnita (4), Alţâna, Nocrich, Roşia and Vurpăr, which insure the medication needed in the health care process.

The town of Agnita holds the only medical unit with beds in the entire region. Its functioning is based on the following medical structure: the internal medicine unit - capacity 18 beds, psychiatric department (8 beds); pediatrics department (9 beds); general surgery unit (9 beds); obstetrics and gynecology (8 beds); maternity ward (4 beds); 1 emergency room; 1 pharmacy; a test lab; a laboratory of radiology and medical imagery; a family planning office; and a school medical office. The territorial town hospital of Agnita also holds a specialized ambulatory, which includes the following units: internal medicine, general surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics and psychiatry.

Table 1. The Network of Infirmaries in Hârtibaciu Valley (January 2009)

			Types of Infirmary		
Crt. No.	**Municipality**	**Village**	**Territorial Infirmaries**	**Company Infirmaries**	**School Infirmaries**
1	Agnita	Agnita	-	2	2
2		Coveş	-	-	-
3		Ruja	-	-	-
4	Alţâna	Alţâna	1	-	-
5		Beneşti	-	-	-
6		Ghijasa de Sus	-	-	-
7	Bârghiş	Bârghiş	1	-	-
8		Apoş	-	-	-
9		Ighişu Vechi	-	-	-
10		Pelişor	-	-	-
11		Vecerd	-	-	-
12		Zlagna	-	-	-
13	Brădeni	Brădeni	1	-	-
14		Retiş	1	-	-
15		Ţeline	1	-	-
16	Bruiu	Bruiu	1	-	-
17		Gherdeal	-	-	-
18		Şomartin	-	-	-
19	Chirpăr	Chirpăr	1	-	-
20		Săsăuş	-	-	-
21		Vărd	-	-	-
22		Veseud	-	-	-
23	Iacobeni	Iacobeni	-	-	-
24		Movile	-	-	-
25		Netuş	1	-	-
26		Noiştat	-	-	-
27		Stejărişu	-	-	-
28	Marpod	Marpod	1	-	-
29		Ilimbav	1	-	-
30	Merghindeal	Merghindeal	1	-	-
31		Dealu Frumos	-	-	-
32	Mihăileni	Mihăileni	-	-	-
33		Metiş	-	-	-

34		Moardăş	-	-	-
35		Răvăşel	1	-	-
36		Şalcău	-	-	-
37	Nocrich	Nocrich	1	-	-
38		Fofeldea	-	-	-
39		Ghijasa de Jos	-	-	-
40		Hosman	1	-	-
41		Ţichindeal	1	-	-
42	Roşia	Roşia	1	-	-
43		Caşolţ	1	-	-
44		Cornăţel	1	-	-
45		Daia	1	-	-
46		Nou	1	-	-
47		Nucet	1	-	-
48	Vurpăr	Vurpăr	1	-	-
49	**Total**		**22**	**2**	**2**

Source: Town Hospital of Agnita and local general practitioners

Table 2. Health care network in Hârtibaciu Valley (January 2009)

Crt. No.	Municipality/ Town	Hospitals	Beds in Hospitals	Infirmaries	Pharmacies	Nurseries
1	Agnita	1	55	4	4	1
2	Alţâna	-	-	1	1	-
3	Bârghiş	-	-	1	-	-
4	Brădeni	-	-	3	-	-
5	Bruiu	-	-	1	-	-
6	Chirpăr	-	-	1	-	-
7	Iacobeni	-	-	1	-	-
8	Marpod	-	-	2	-	-
9	Merghindeal	-	-	1	-	-
10	Mihăileni	-	-	1	-	-
11	Nocrich	-	-	3	1	-
12	Roşia	-	-	6	1	
13	Vurpăr	-	-	1	1	-
14	**Total**	**1**	**55**	**26**	**8**	**1**

Source: Town Hospital of Agnita and local general practitioners

The hospital and the specialized ambulatory are staffed with 7 specialized doctors, 1 pharmacist, 33 nurses and 16 auxiliary staff. The town hospital of Agnita also has a modern *special social-medical facility* under the direct jurisdiction of the Agnita town hall, equipped with 25 beds, 1 specialized physician and 10 medical nurses. It offers its health care services to the town's elderly folk.

3. Medical staff

The number of medical staff (table 3) (doctors, pharmacists, nurses) in the Hârtibaciu Valley places this region in the national average of rural areas and small towns. Compared to the situation across the European Union (Adler 1996), these values are far from positive, because European medical directives take as acceptable a general average of 200 inhabitants/health care professional.

There are 31 specialized doctors active, for a total population of 35205 inhabitants, meaning 1135,64 inhabitants/practitioner, region-wise. The largest number of specialized medical staff is in Agnita (14 doctors), both at the town hospital (7 doctors) and in local medical offices. The Marpod, Roşia and Vurpăr municipalities hold 3, and 2 doctors respectively, while the other municipalities each have 1. The most encouraging values in this respect are the Marpod municipality (339,66 inhabitants/practitioner), the Bruiu municipality (753,00 inhabitants/doctor) and the town of Agnita (778,14 inhabitants/doctor). As it is, these numbers are still much higher than the European Union average. In the other municipalities, the number of inhabitants surpasses 1000/doctor. The least favorable situations are in Bârghiş (2173,00 inhabitants/doctor), Iacobeni (2810,00 inhabitants/doctor) and Nocrich (2633,00 inhabitants/doctor);

Table 3. Medical staff in private and public sector (January 2009)

Crt. no.	Municipality /Town	Population	Doctors	Dentists	Pharmacists	Nurses	Doctors/ Inhabitants
1	Agnita	10894	14	4	5	33	**778.14**
2	Alţâna	1797	1	-	1	1	1797,00
3	Bârghiş	2173	1	-	-	1	2173,00
4	Brădeni	1501	1	-	-	2	1501,00
5	Bruiu	753	1	-	-	1	753,00
6	Chirpăr	1800	1	-	-	2	1800,00
7	Iacobeni	2810	1	-	-	2	**2810,00**
8	Marpod	1019	3	-	-	1	**339,66**
9	Merghindeal	1426	1	1	-	2	1426,00
10	Mihăileni	1072	1	-	-	1	1072,00
11	Nocrich	2633	1	1	1	2	2633,00
12	Roșia	4827	3	1	1	4	1609,00
13	Vurpăr	2500	2	1	2	1	1250,00
14	**Total**	**35205**	**31**	**8**	**10**	**53**	**1135,64**

Source: Town Hospital of Agnita and local general practitioners

There are 31 specialized doctors active, for a total population of 35205 inhabitants, meaning 1135,64 inhabitants/practitioner, region-wise. The largest number of specialized medical staff is in Agnita (14 doctors), both at the town hospital (7 doctors) and in local medical offices. The Marpod, Roşia and Vurpăr municipalities hold 3, and 2 doctors respectively, while the other municipalities each have 1. The most encouraging values in this respect are the Marpod municipality (339,66 inhabitants/practitioner), the Bruiu municipality (753,00 inhabitants/doctor) and the town of Agnita (778,14 inhabitants/doctor). As it is, these numbers are still much higher than the European Union average. In the other municipalities, the number of inhabitants surpasses 1000/doctor. The least favorable situations are in Bârghiş (2173,00 inhabitants/doctor), Iacobeni (2810,00 inhabitants/doctor) and Nocrich (2633,00 inhabitants/doctor).

As for dental care, there are 8 dentists in the whole region, of which 4 in Agnita and the rest in Merghindeal (1), Nocrich (1), Roşia (1) *and Vurpăr (1).* All the other municipalities lack trained personnel, meaning people have to go to Agnita or Sibiu for dental check-ups and specialized interventions. The region's average when it comes to number of inhabitants/dentist is 4400,63, significantly higher than the EU average of 300.00 inhabitants/dentist.

The number of pharmacists in the area creates a situation similar to that of dentists, as there are a total of 10 pharmacists (5 in Agnita, 2 in Vurpăr, and 1 in each of the municipalities of Alţâna, Nocrich and Roşia). The number of inhabitants per pharmacist is 3520,50, as opposed to an average of 300.00 across the European Union.

When it comes to nurses, the numbers look better, but the staff is unevenly spread. There are 53 specialized nurses, of whom 33 are in Agnita's Town Hospital, and the remaining 20 are spread across some of the other municipalities (4 in Roşia, 2 in Brădeni, Chirpăr, Iacobeni, Merghindeal and Nocrich, and 1 in each of the other municipalities). There are 664,25 inhabitants/nurse on the average (the EU average is of 100 inhabitants/nurse).

There is only one conclusion that can be drawn from these medical indicators: in order to insure quality health care, immediate action must be taken to increase the number of medical staff.

4. Main demographic and health care indicators

According to the values of the *main demographic and health care indicators* that affect and result from the state of health of the population, the region is within normal limits and comparable to the national average. Nonetheless, there is one indicator which is higher than the national average, and that is the *birth rate and the rate of* *natural increase*. This positive value can be explained by the significant number of Rroma inhabitants in the area.

A thorough analysis of the main demographic and health care indicators, as well as of the main causes of decease, reveals the following aspects and values (Tables 4-5).

Birth rate - in 2008, it was 10,60‰ on average (373 births all throughout the region). The highest values (over 15,00‰) were in Alţâna, Bruiu, Iacobeni, Nocrich and Vurpăr, meaning in areas where Rroma population was more substantial. Among the lowest numbers (under 10,00‰) were in Agnita (such a demographic behavior is specific to the Romanian urban environment), in Bârghiş, Chirpăr and Roşia, that is, in municipalities where the Rroma population represents less than the regional average.

Mortality - with average values at national level, but higher than the European Union average, which is concerning. The regional average for this indicator is 7,58‰, which means a natural increase rate of 3,02‰, significantly higher than the national average (again influenced by the large number of Rroma inhabitants in the area). The lowest mortality rates are in Agnita (5,78‰) (given the better health care and hygiene conditions) and in Brădeni, Bruiu, Chirpăr and Vurpăr, while the highest are in Alţâna, Marpod and Mihăileni (over 10,00‰).

Table 4. Main demographic indicators in Hârtibaciu Valley (2008)

Crt. no.	**Municipality /Town**	**Popu lation**	**‰ Birth Rate Newborns**	**‰ Mortality Deceased**	**‰ Infant Mortality Deceased**
1	Agnita	10894	62 (5,69‰	63 (5,78‰	1 (0,09‰)
2	Alţâna	1797	27 (15,03‰)	24 (13,36‰)	-
3	Bârghiş	2173	20 (9,20‰)	18 (8,28‰)	-
4	Brădeni	1501	19 (12,65‰)	9 (5,99‰)	-
5	Bruiu	753	12 (15,94‰)	5 (6,64‰)	-
6	Chirpăr	1800	11 (6,11‰)	11 (6,11‰)	-
7	Iacobeni	2810	47 (16,72‰)	21 (7,47‰)	-
8	Marpod	1019	11 (10,79‰)	19 (18,65‰)	1 (0,98‰)

9	Merghindeal	1426	19 (13,32‰)	12 (8,42‰)	-
10	Mihăileni	1072	15 (13,99‰)	11 (10,26‰)	-
11	Nocrich	2633	48 (18,23‰)	23 (8,74‰)	-
12	Roşia	4827	30 (6,21‰)	35 (7,26‰)	-
13	Vurpăr	2500	52 (20,8‰)	16 (6,40‰)	-
14	Total	35205	373 (10,60‰)	267 (7,58‰)	2 (0,06‰)

Source: Town Hospital of Agnita and local general practitioners

Infant mortality is very low (0,06‰ in 2008), which is encouraging. In 2008, there have been only 2 cases of decease in newborns aged less than a year, one in Marpod and the other in Agnita, both due to genetic malformations.

Table 5. Main causes of mortality in Hârtibaciu Valley (2008)

Crt. No.	MunicipalityTown/	Standardized mortality (top five causes of death) (‰)					
		Respiratory diseases	Tumors	Digestive diseases	AccidentsTrauma	Circulatory diseases	Other
1	Agnita	11 (17,46%)	8 (12,70%)	7 (11,11%)	2 (3,17%)	30 (47,62%)	5 (7,94%)
2	Alţâna	1 (4,17%)	6 (25,00%)	2 (8,33%)	1 (4,17%)	14 (58,33%)	-
3	Bârghiş	-	4 (22,22%)	-	-	14 (77,78%)	-
4	Brădeni	1 (9,01%)	3 (34,34%)	-	-	5 (56,56)	-
5	Bruiu	1 (20,00%)	1 (20,00%)	1 (20,00%)	-	2 (40,00%)	
6	Chirpăr	2 (18,18%)	1 (9,09%)	-	-	8 (72,72%)	-
7	Iacobeni	3 (14,29%)	5 (23,80%)	3 (14,29%	-	10 (47,62%)	-
8	Marpod	4 (21,05%)	1 (5,26%)	1 (5,26%)	-	13 (68,43)	-
9	Merghindeal	2	3	1	-	5	1

		(16,67%)	(25,00%)	(8,33%)		(41,67)	(8,33%)
10	Mihăileni	2 (18,18%)	4 (36,36%)	1 (9,09%)	1 (9,09)	2 (18,18)	1 (9,09%)
11	Nocrich	6 (26,10%)	4 (17,38%)	1 (4,35%)	-	12 (52,17)	-
12	Roşia	1 (2,83%)	13 (37,15%)	2 (5,72%)	-	17 (48,58)	2 (5,72%)
13	Vurpăr	-	2 (12,50%)	3 (18,75)	1 (6,25)	10 (62,5%)	-
14	Total	34 (12,73%)	55 (20,60%)	22 (8,24%)	5 (1,87%)	142 (53,19%)	9 (3,37%)

Source: Town Hospital of Agnita and local general practitioners

Standardized mortality (the top five causes of death) reveal the following information: the total number of deceased in Hârtibaciu Valley in 2008 amounted to 267 people. The main causes of these deaths were: *circulatory diseases* (142 people - 53,19%), *tumors* (55 people - 20,60%), *respiratory diseases* (34 people - 12,73%), *digestive diseases* (22 people - 8,24%), *trauma and accidents* (5 people - 1,87%) and *other causes* (9 people - 3,37%).

Starting from these facts, the health care decision makers of Sibiu must set a new strategy and new priorities which take into account the specific diseases that do the most damage among the population of this region.

Specific morbidity, meaning chronic diseases, was quite high in rural areas at the end of 2008, as opposed to urban areas (*sugar diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, nutrition based disorders, hepatitis, congenital anomalies* ecc).

5. Current malfunctions

The high numbers of specific morbidity and pathological diseases in this region, as well as the rate of possible errors of statistic data and reports (the legislation is incomplete and allows quite a few errors in reports and records) carries useful information regarding how particular services are organized, how material resources are planned, how specific malign risk factors are assessed and consequently how strategies of improvement are built and implemented.

We have already noted earlier that *health care services* are organized on 3 basic levels. The data related to this fact shows that medical units are unevenly spread throughout the area. Moreover, there is also the population close to the area to consider, as they too benefit from treatment in these medical units - in the Agnita town hospital first of all. There is only one hospital for a number of 35205 inhabitants, and it has a capacity of 55 beds.

The most severe malfunctions in this respect are the *low number of medical staff* in rural areas, the *improper state* of some of the *buildings* where medical units and infirmaries are located, and their *poor equipment*, both materially and technologically speaking. We are not only referring to infirmaries, but also to dental offices and pharmacies.

The qualified medical staff coverage is positive in value only in urban areas. The number of doctors and pharmacists working in both the public and the private sector of Agnita is greater than the national average, while in rural areas it is the other way around.

A careful examination of the health indicators reveals the low *functional effectiveness of primary health care* and of specialized ambulatory services. Moreover, patients are ready to accept (apparently for subjective reasons) rather high costs, compared to the medical ambulatory services offered, by their willingness to be admitted into the hospital even if they could also be treated otherwise. The overall state of health of the population of the Hârtibaciu Valley is rather poor, except in urban areas, where medical infrastructure and staff are of significantly better quality.

6. Swot analysis

A SWOT analysis of the medical sector in Hârtibaciu Valley exposes the following peculiarities:

Strengths:

-the population's individual perception of their own state of health is optimistic (especially among youth);
-the town of Agnita is perceived as the main medical center in the whole region;
-there is a hospital with well trained medical staff in Agnita.

Weaknesses:

- poor quality of health care in rural areas;
- the low diversity of health care services for certain social and professional categories (like for workers, in most companies);
- the high average of abortions, mortality, and infant mortality;
- the low pay of the second degree medical staff (nurses), especially in rural areas;
- the low number of first degree medical staff (doctors) and of second degree medical staff.

Opportunities:

- promotion of national programs related to health care education; growth, diversification and improvement of health care services for all social categories;
- hiring an acceptable number of qualified personnel.

Threats:
- the most important threat is that youth will leave rural area in search for a better quality of life, which will lead to aging of the areas' population;
- the population will have less and less faith in medical staff and services.

7. Strategic elements

From the public health perspective, the territorial development strategy of Hârtibaciu Valley must be an integrated part of the strategy of the whole region. The latter is based on a series of *strategic objectives* and complex *development plans*. In this case, the main objective is *improving the quality of health among the population of Hârtibaciu Valley by bettering health infrastructure and hiring qualified personnel.*

The said objective can only be achieved through permanently relating 3 types of factors with specific tasks: *local decision-makers* (Mayors and Local Council Members of each administrative unit in Hârtibaciu), *health service managers* (the Health Authority of Sibiu), and the *health care beneficiaries* (local communities). However, the lack of cooperation between the parties involved can lead to misunderstandings and mistrust in the health care process, at the same time making it unlikely for the current issues to be resolved.

The regional strategy of improving the quality of health care, developing health care infrastructure and, eventually, improving the quality of life, implies a number of specific measures.

There are three levels of *public health care* in Hârtibaciu Valley: primary health care (individual, associated or mixed general practitioners' offices; school and company infirmaries, specialized medical offices and units meaning dentists' offices, pharmacies and emergency rooms), *ambulatory specialized health care* and *hospital health care*.

The health issues of this region are similar to those at national level, which all have to do with the *large number of patients per health care professional* (which makes it very difficult for the medical performance to run smoothly), *the great lack of admittance places in hospitals*, *the citizens' carelessness when it comes to being subjected to periodic medical check-ups, lack of funds for medicine which is free or compensated by law, lack of transparency in the area of equipment purchasing, lack of trust the population has in medical care and professional deontology of health care workers, and so on*.

Among the possible steps to be taken at regional level in order to solve health problems, there are:

- the creation of territorial medical infirmaries in some of the dwellings in this region where their number is not sufficient (compared to the numbers across the European Union). We suggest structuring territorial infirmaries in the following local units (which have a large population and very few medical practices): Coveş and Ruja (belonging to Agnita municipality), Pelişor (Bârghiş), Vărd (Chirpăr), Noiştat and Stejărişu (Iacobeni), Dealu Frumos (Merghindeal), Mihăileni (Mihăileni). Their existence would solve 2 serious issues: (1) the number of patients/family doctor would diminish and (2) the distance from the dwelling to the infirmary would be reduced;

- throughout the European Union, every school must have their own medical unit (Decroly, Vanlaer, 1991). Therefore, we suggest creating school infirmaries in each municipal center: Alţâna, Bârghiş, Brădeni, Bruiu, Chirpăr, Iacobeni, Marpod, Merghindeal, Mihăileni, Nocrich, Roşia and Vurpăr;

- increasing the number of health care workers (doctors and nurses) in the administrative units with a larger population, in order to achieve the EU ratio of 500 patients/practitioner and 1000 patients/nurse. It is absolutely required that the medical units in all villages and towns hire qualified personnel, especially if the patients/practitioner ratio is higher than 1000/1, such as: Alţâna, Bârghiş, Brădeni, Chirpăr Iacobeni, Merghindeal, Mihăileni, Nocrich, Roşia and Vurpăr;

- hiring only trained personnel in health care units;

- increasing social health care services for certain professional and social categories which are presently less provided for (whether retired, unemployed, or in social care);

- creating two medical units with beds (either autonomous or as departments of the Agnita hospital) at Roşia (maybe Daia) and at Iacobeni, to offer a desirable proximity to the inhabitants of both the western, and respectively, the eastern part of the region;

- lowering, through specific measures, the high numbers of certain indicators, such as: mortality, infant mortality, abortion, and so on;

- increasing wages, especially for ancillary medical personnel, especially in rural areas;

- creating pharmacies (at least one for each) in whichever administrative subdivision that hasn't got one yet. We suggest that there be a pharmacy (or anything like it) in Bârghiş, Brădeni, Bruiu, Chirpăr, Iacobeni, Marpod, Merghindeal and Mihăileni, which could assist the communities nearby;

- creating dentists' practices (at least one for each) in the units that lack one as yet. We suggest the following units: Alţâna, Bârghiş, Brădeni, Bruiu, Chirpăr, Iacobeni, Marpod and Mihăileni, so that the corresponding communities could be properly assisted;

- we propose that a center of treatment and recovery be built in Agnita, so that acute and chronic diseases specific to this region can be accurately and properly diagnosed. It is desirable that such a center have a social assistance structure meant for elderly people (there is such a structure now, but of small dimensions);

- better advertising of national programs regarding health education, and improvement and growth of health care services for all social categories;
- implementing a regional surveillance program in order to monitor the population (under the protection of the Health Authority in Sibiu), for a more effective prevention and recognition of the main mortality causes, some of which are quite obvious: circulatory diseases, tumors, respiratory diseases;
- increasing faith in medical services, by rendering high quality medical services.

All in all, suggesting and implementing specific measures is no easy task, as the decision for their implementation does not rest solely upon the shoulders of the local decision-makers; technically, local authorities (Mayors and local councilors) have no attributions in this respect; the directives come from higher levels. However, we deem the measures we propose as highly up-to-date, appropriate, and timely.

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La maisnie, « la plus petite unité sociale »
Précisions terminologiques

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Abstract: The present paper brings into light the French word *maisnie,* currently used in the Social Sciences by scholars dedicated to the study of households units, especially from the South - East European region.

In 1974, the Romania originated French anthropologist Paul Henri Stahl is the first one to introduce this 11th century French word into the Social Sciences. His choice came as a response to a translation dilemma he found himself confronted with, while writing his studies regarding the South - East European social units: the inexistence in the currently French language of a word able to designate the "smallest social unit", as he called the household. Instead of creating a new word (as in the well known case of the *zadruga*), he propose one which had actually been used in the different regional French dialects in the Middle Ages, *maisnie*. This word used to designate a social unit very similar to the Romanian *gospodărie*, the Bulgarian *družina* or *kupčina,* the Serbo-Croatian *domačinstvo,* the Albanian *shtëpi* or the Greek *mikokiato.*

Starting by specifying the particular context in which this word made its entrance in the vocabulary of the Social Sciences, the paper continues by focusing on the social reality hidden behind this complex notion. In the last part conclusions are drawn with regard to the applicability of the ancient French notion of *maisnie* to comparable social units from the South - East European region.

Keywords: household, *maisnie,* social units, family, domestic group.

Depuis plus de trente-cinq ans, le terme *maisnie* fait partie du vocabulaire des Sciences Sociales, où il est employé essentiellement par les scientifiques dédiés à l'étude des différentes populations habitant le sud-est de l'Europe[1]. On pourrait dans ce cas se demander pourquoi vouloir apporter maintenant des précisions terminologiques sur cette notion?

[1] Voir par exemple les études de Dejan Dimitrijević (1995), Vintilă Mihăilescu et Viorica Nicolau (1995), Vintilă Mihăilescu (2000), Gheorghe Şişeştean (2005).

Tout simplement, parce que dernièrement, on m'a questionné sur l'opportunité d'emploi du mot *maisnie* dans la traduction en français de l'albanais *shtëpi*. La remarque, je l'avoue, m'a surprise, tant le mot est devenu incontournable pour qui s'interroge sur « la plus petite unité sociale »[2]. Mais puisque des voix s'élèvent aujourd'hui et remettent en question le bien-fondé du choix de ce mot, il m'appartient ici d'apporter quelques précisions. En premier lieu, ce sont les circonstances de son entrée dans les Sciences Sociales que je préciserai. Puis, j'expliquerai les réalités sociales qui se cachent derrièrre cette notion complexe.

La maisnie a fait son entrée dans les Sciences Sociales au début des années '70 grâce à Paul Henri Stahl. La raison qui a poussé l'anthropologue français d'origine roumaine à aller chercher ce mot dans l'Ancien Français est liée à une question de traduction. Ayant des difficultés à trouver dans la langue française actuelle un mot générique pour désigner les concepts similaires de : *gospodărie* (roumain), *družina, kupčina* (bulgare), *domačinstvo* (serbo-croate), *shtëpi* (albanais), *mikokiato* (grec), il a fini par choisir celui de *maisnie,* disparue depuis longtemps du langage courant. Son choix, paraît-il, a été insufflé par Claude Levi-Strauss[3], qui se trouvait à l'époque à la tête du Laboratoire d'Anthropologie Sociale dont Paul Henri Stahl était devenu membre peu de temps après son arrivée en France, en 1970.

Le choix de mots constitue un défi pour tout scientifique habitué à publier en plusieurs langues, particulièrement dans les Sciences Sociales où les notions sont fortement ancrées dans le temps et l'espace, rendant toute traduction plus ou moins approximatives. Dans les cas qui nous intéressent, la difficulté consiste surtout dans la complexité des concepts à désigner car, comme le soulignait Paul Henri Stahl, « les paysans envisagent habituellement leur vie sociale dans toute sa complexité, et non par secteurs isolés ». Les scientifiques pêchent trop souvent, considère-t-il, par « l'isolement artificiel d'un seul aspect, tiré du cadre unitaire de la vie sociale », fait qui ne peut que tronquer la réalité sociale. C'est par désir d'aller vers ses sujets d'étude et d'« adopter un point de vue proche de celui des paysans eux-mêmes » que l'auteur part en quête d'un concept approprié pour désigner « l'unité sociale dans son ensemble, avec la maison, son groupe domestique, ses propriétés » (Stahl 1978: 91-92).

C'est dans l'article intitulé « Groupe domestique, maison, maisniée. Le cas roumain » (Stahl 1974), que *la maisnie* (écrite pour l'instant *maisniée*) fait timidement son entrée. L'auteur donne peu d'explications sur son choix, en mentionnant uniquement qu'il s'agit d'un mot pris de l'Ancien Français et qui « correspond

[2] L'expression appartient à Paul Henri Stahl.

[3] Paul Henri Stahl à lui-même avoué ce fait à un de ses proches collaborateurs et ancien étudiant, Gheorghe Şişeştean, actuellement professeur à l'Université de Oradea ; c'est de lui que je détiens l'information.

exactement à la réalité couverte par le mot [roumain] de gospodărie » (Stahl 1974: 401).

Des précisions sont apportées quelques années plus tard, en 1978, dans un autre article, « La maisnie (*gospodăria*) du paysan roumain » (Stahl 1978), où le mot qui nous intéresse trouve sa forme simplifiée la plus répandue (avec un seul « e » final), et son sens, celui de « groupe domestique, vivant autour du même feu et du même pot, sur une propriété commune qu'il exploite en commun ». Si le mot *maison* désigne la demeure, et le mot *maisonnée* fait référence au groupe domestique qui l'habite, le mot *maisnie* inclue les deux à la fois, et désigne « l'unité sociale en son ensemble » (Stahl 1978: 92). Grâce à leur contenu social étroitement lié, affirme Paul Henri Stahl, ces trois mots sont apparentés (en effet, tous proviennent du latin *mansio*, demeure), ce qui fait que parfois l'un soit employé pour désigner les autres (1978: 92-93).

Mais avant même de le définir, l'auteur s'empresse de mentionner que le concept en question « correspond à la signification donnée par les paysans balkaniques à leur plus petite unité sociale » (Stahl 1978: 92). Il s'agit donc d'un concept qui couvre les principaux aspects impliqués dans tous les concepts balkaniques mentionnés plus haut, et non pas d'une traduction fidèle du mot roumain *gospodărie*. En anglais, on l'appellerait *household* et en allemand *haushalt*. D'ailleurs, dans ses textes publiés en roumain, l'auteur utilisera de la même manière le mot roumain *gospodărie,* pour parler des autres unités sociales correspondantes de la région. Et c'est justement pour gagner en précision que dans ses études Paul Henri Stahl fait le choix de toujours rajouter aux concepts-clés, les mots d'origine, écrits dans la langue des populations étudiées.

Paul Henri Stahl ne reviendra plus sur son choix ou sur la définition de *la maisnie*. Pour lui, le mot deviendra un simple instrument de travail destiné à exprimer en français les réalités sociales étudiées pour le sud-est de l'Europe.

Néanmoins, de nos jours, rares sont ceux qui connaissent le sens original de cet ancien mot français. C'est pourquoi, dans les pages qui suivent, je désire apporter quelques précisions. Il n'est pas dans mon intention de faire une étude approfondie sur la notion de *maisnie*, car les aspects qui en découlent sont fort nombreux et renvoient à des connaissances poussées dans le domaine de la linguistique, de l'histoire et du droit, entre autres.

Trouver des renseignements sur *la maisnie* s'avère vite être une tâche ardue. D'origine populaire[4], le mot connaît des dizaines de graphies différentes en fonction de la région, la province, l'auteur, fait qui ne facilita guère les recherches.

[4] Il faut remarquer le fait que Paul Henri Stahl a choisi un mot qui a réellement fait partie du langage courant des gens d'autrefois. L'exemple de la *zadrouga*, comme concept inventé, est bien-connu dans la littérature.

Je l'ai moi-même rencontré sous plus d'une trentaine de formes différentes[5] parmi lesquelles *maisnie* et *mesnie* semblent être les plus répandues.

Le mot est issu, d'après la plupart des auteurs, du bas latin *mansionata*, à son tour issu du latin littéraire *mansio*, maison, demeure. Mais la question de son étymologie est loin d'être claire. Hensleigh Wedgwood, cherchant à établir l'origine de l'anglais *meiny, menial,* l'équivalent du français *maisnie*, qu'il traduit par « family, household, company or servants », affirme qu'il est « one of the most puzzling words to the etymologist » (1862: 399)[6]; et cela à cause de la contamination avec plusieurs mots latins apparentés comme *mansus* (qui en français a donné *manse*[7]) et *manentes* (fr. *manant*[8]). On ajouterait *mansonil* (fr. *ménil, mesnil* ou *maisnil*[9]).

Maisnie est pour la première fois mentionné par écrit (sous la forme de *maisnede*) dans un texte datant de ca.1050 (*Trésor*…1985, XI: 630), pour tomber en désuétude par la suite et pratiquement disparaître aux alentours du XVIIe siècle.

En ce qui concerne les sens qui lui sont attribués, les renseignements apportés par les dictionnaires d'Ancien Français sont plutôt vagues, imprécis et parfois confus. Le plus souvent, on se contente de donner comme synonymes les mots « famille », « maison », et/ou « ménage », sans trop de précisions, et ceci malgré le fait que les trois sont des concepts complexes, avec des sens et acceptations multiples[10].

Néanmoins, on arrive à déceler un premier sens au mot, celui de groupe domestique ou d'ensemble de personnes qui « demeurent dans la même maison » (Larousse 1873: 1445), « habitent une même maison »[11], « vivent sous un même toit » [12] ou « qu'un même chien garde la nuit » (Funck-Brentano 1912: 13). C'est la

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[5] *maisni(é)e, mesni(é)e, meignie, mé(g)nie, me(s)gnie, mei(s)nie, mes(g)née, maingnie, maisnée, mai(s)gnée, mesne* etc. (Godefroy 1888: 96, 294, Littré 1874: 511).

[6] A voir aussi Müeller 1867.

[7] Terme employé depuis le début du VIIe siècle dans les textes latins, pour designer, au sens le plus strict « la parcelle habitée dans le village, le lieu de foyer », et par extension « l'ensemble de l'exploitation dont le point de résidence est le centre » (Duby 1977, I: 94-101).

[8] Habitant, demeurant, homme possédant une demeure (Larousse 1873: 1043).

[9] Maison, habitation accompagnée d'un champ (Normandie, Picardie, Flandre française), et par extension hameau ou village. Mot d'ancien français, abandonné au XVIe siècle qui continue à subsister dans des noms de personnes comme Dumai(s)nil, Dume(s)nil, Dumeignil, ou dans de noms de localités Le Ménil, Le Mesnil (Godefroy 1888: 296. Robert 1985: 366, Rey 2001: 1349, Morlet 1991: 358, 359, 684, Littré 1874: 511).

[10] A voir entre autres: Roquefort 1808: 119-120. Daele 1901: 276. Sainte-Palaye 1880: 232, Rey 1992: 170, Larousse 1873: 1445, Lacombe 1766: 322, Furetière 1701: s.p.

[11] Texte du 1344 signalé par Edmonde Papin pour la *mesnie* (*Dictionnaire du Moyen Française* 2009, point A).

[12] Texte du 1340 signalé par Noël Musso pour la *maisnie* (*Dictionnaire du Moyen Française* 2009, point A).

« grande famille » (Greimas, Keane 1992: 394, Burguy 1856: 236) ou la « famille agrandie » (Funck-Brentano 1912: 12), qui à part les gens apparentés au maître peut aussi bien inclure ses domestiques, ses amis et tous ceux qui forment sa suite : « la femme, les enfants, serviteurs et domestiques d'un père de famille, et même tous ceux qui sont à sa suite » (Furetière 1701: s.p.).

Deux éléments rassemblent toutes ces personnes : tout d'abord la maison, la demeure qui les abrite, et deuxièmement, l'autorité du maître des lieux autour duquel ils se retrouvent tous. La maisnie s'avère ainsi être plus qu'un simple ensemble de personnes, elle se constitue dans une unité sociale complexe qui inclue aussi bien les gens que les lieux qu'ils habitent. Selon Frédéric Godefroy, elle est à la fois: « ménage, [et] la maison qui abrite un ménage », les deux en arrivant à se confondre (1888: 294-296). C'est un « ensemble matériel et moral formé par la famille et les serviteurs, l'entourage ordinaire d'un maître », comme le nomme Anne Lombard-Jourdan (2005: 251). D'après F.Funck-Brentano, elle comprend « la famille, les parents réunis autour du chef de la branche principale, les serviteurs, tous ceux qui vivent autour, pour et par '*la maison*' » (1926: 7).

Le mot était apparemment largement répandu au cours du Moyen Age. On arrive toujours à lui retrouver la trace dans des expressions (comme « de trop grand'maisnie », pour de trop bonne famille, ou « viande de mesnie », pour pot-au-feu etc.), des proverbes (on disait « tel seigneur, telle mesnie », comme on aurait dit « tel père, tel fils »), des chansons de geste, des contrats et des chartes. « Dieux gart le roi et sa lignée – écrit-on dans les Miracles de Notre-Dame – Fame et enfants, frères, mesgnée » (Funck-Brentano 1912: 11, 14).

Pour mieux comprendre le sens original du mot, faisons un petit voyage dans le temps, pour revenir aux alentours des IXe-Xe siècles à l'époque où le territoire de France était ravagé par les invasions successives et où le pays était plongé dans l'insécurité la plus totale. Dans ses conditions particulièrement difficiles, quand l'Etat et toutes ses structures cessent d'exister, la population se replie sur elle-même ; elle se renferme dans des habitations fortifiées qui la protègent et arrive à subsister seule aux besoins de ses membres. La « famille prend la place de l'Etat » comme affirme l'historien Jacques Flach (1893: 429). La vie sociale se déroule autour du foyer et s'organise sous l'autorité du père de famille, ou du maître. Celui-ci « commande au groupe qui se presse autour de lui et porte son nom, il organise la défense commune, répartit le travail selon les capacités et la condition de chacun : il « règne » - le mot est dans les textes - en maître absolu » (Funck-Brentano 1912: 10).

Avec le temps, le groupe, à ses débuts apparenté, s'élargit. « Les parents groupés autour de leur chef forment le noyau d'un compagnonnage étendu » qui va devenir *la maisnie* (Flach 1893: 455). Elle se complète d'abord par « les fils et les proches des vassaux ou des alliés les plus fidèles » (Flach 1893: 456); ensuite on fait entrer les « estranges » (Funck-Brentano 1912: 14) qui viendront s'y joindre. Ils vont tous adopter les mœurs et les coutumes du groupe qui ne perd pas pour autant son caractère familial, apparenté, à tel point que les mots *maisnie, parenté*, *lignage* en arriveront à se confondre (Funck-Brentano 1912: 15). Au centre de tous, se trouve le maître, « dont tous lèvent l'enseigne, dont tous fixent avec des clous de cuivre le gonfanon au bout de leur lance en bois verni, dont tous poussent le cri de guerre, dont tous portent le nom : tous ensemble ils forment la mesnie un tel » (Funck-Brentano 1912: 15)[13]. Des sentiments forts unissent les membres de la même maisnie ; une affection réciproque, profonde et dévouée les lient les uns aux autres et le sentiment d'appartenir à la même maisnie comme à la même famille (Funck-Brentano 1912: 19). Le maître est le juge suprême ; il nourrit ses sujets, il les habille, les instruit au métier des armes, leur offrent deniers et chevaux, des armes de chevaliers et parfois même leurs attribue des terres ; de leur coté les membres de sa maisnie le défendront et le suivront contre l'ennemi ; ils forment sa suite et son armée. Le nombre de ses « compagnons » s'élève au début à quarante, cent, trois cents chevaliers, pour en arriver, avec l'emploi de mercenaires (« soudoyers ») jusqu'à 20 000 hommes d'armes, comme cela le fut apparemment pour Guillaume d'Orange (Funck-Brentano 1912: 16-17). La maisnie s'est tellement agrandie qu'elle s'est éloignée de son sens d'origine. Tous ses membres n'habitent plus forcément ensemble ; ceux qui habitent toujours sous le même toit avec leur maître forment désormais sa *maisnie privée* (Funck-Brentano 1912: 17). Dans son sein se forment des classes, différentes catégories de personnes, en fonction des rapports plus au moins proches qu'ils entretiennent avec leur chef, ou seigneur (Flach 1893: 464).

La maisnie évolue avec le temps. Une fois les conditions de vie améliorées et le climat d'insécurité qui l'a vu naître disparu, le sens du mot change lui-aussi ; il se restreint peu à peu et perd sa substance. Il fini par désigner un « train, suite, et compagnie d'un seigneur, ses hommes d'armes, ses troupes » et par extension une compagnie en général (Godefroy 1888: 295). Au XVIIe siècle, dans le langage courant, on l'employait encore pour désigner les domestiques (Godefroy 1888: 296). Il va néanmoins bientôt disparaître et laisser sa place à un nouveau mot, *maisonnée*[14], qui ne reprend qu'une partie de sa signification originale. Souvent employé par les historiens, *la maisonnée* désigne « les personnes d'une famille qui habitent la même maison/ le même foyer » (Larousse 1873: 969, Littré 1982: 3656, Sainte-Palaye 1880: 233). Le groupe humain qu'il désigne inclue les personnes

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[13] La même citation quasiment identique chez Jacques Flach (1893: 459).

[14]*Maisonnée* est également issue du bas latin *mansionata* (*Mémoires de l'Académie*…1869: 219). Voir aussi Picoche 1983: 409. Noël, Carpentier 1839: 279.

apparentés, habitant ensemble, avec leurs domestiques (le mot famille est ici employé dans le sens large). Il a perdu toute référence à la solidarité et l'esprit d'unité qui animaient les membres de la maisnie d'autrefois, et aussi bien l'osmose existante entre les habitants et leur habitat. Le sociologue Henri Mendras remarque le fait qu'il « désigne des gens qui vivent ensemble sans nécessairement avoir une activité économique commune » (1979: 58).

Avant de conclure, revenons quelques instants à la question des synonymes proposés pour le mot *maisnie,* sans plus traiter de ceux qui ont déjà été mentionnés.

Le mot *famille*, souvent mentionné par les dictionnaires, et employé avec insistance par les scientifiques, est fermement réfuté par Paul Henri Stahl, pour plusieurs raisons. Tout d'abord il signifie l'existence d'un groupe de personnes apparentées qui peuvent ou non vivre ensemble. En plus, ses limites sont vagues et imprécises concernant tantôt un couple, tantôt tous les gens apparentés à quelqu'un. Et au-dessus de tout, il fait référence uniquement au groupe humain, en ignorant d'autres aspects définitoires pour une maisnie. A la place, Paul Henri Stahl propose le concept de *groupe domestique,* qui laisse entendre la vie commune du groupe, le travail partagé, la propriété commune de ses biens, les fêtes et les traditions communes, sans pour autant exclure la possible parenté de ses membres. Cet avis est partagé par Henri Mendras qui utilise lui-aussi le concept de *groupe domestique*, pour parler de la « famille paysanne », même s'il trouve aussi bien appropriés les anciens termes de *feu*, ou mieux, celui de *maisnie*, proposée par Paul Henri Stahl (1979: 58).

Principalement, on pourra apporter les mêmes reproches au mot *ménage.* Lui aussi est vague et imprécis, en indiquant tantôt un couple (légitime ou non), tantôt un couple avec ses enfants, et même l'ensemble des personnes habitant le même foyer. Il fait plutôt référence aux tâches domestiques ou aux aspects liés à la gestion des ressources. Henri Mendras, trouve qu'il évoque plutôt la cellule conjugale moderne, la consommation et les activités ménagères (1979: 58).

Famille, mais surtout *ménage* sont des mots de date plus récente dans la langue française que *maisnie* (XIIIe-XIVe siècles pour *famille*[15] et fin XVII-début XVIIIe siècles pour *ménage,* paru d'abord comme *mesnage,* par contamination avec *maisnie*[16]). Pour les langues véhiculées dans le sud-est européen, ce sont des néologismes de date relativement récente (XIXe siècle) ; ils sont donc longtemps restés inconnus aux habitants de la région, pour la plupart des paysans illettrés.

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[15]A voir entre autres: *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* 2000: 100.

[16]A voir entre autres: Brachet s.a.: 347, Hatzfeld, Darmesteter, Thomas 1924: 1499, *Grand Larousse…* 1975; IV: 3307.

Dans le langage des paysans et des gens du passé en général, il y avait deux catégories de mots pour désigner « la plus petite unité sociale », souligne Paul Henri Stahl (2000: 192; 1986: 167). L'une avec des mots génériques, qui couvrent tous les aspects impliqués, comme c'est le cas pour des mots comme *maisnie* (*gospodărie, domačinstvo*, *mikokiato*, *household, haushalt*), et l'autre avec des mots aux significations multiples, comme c'est le cas pour : *maison* (roum. *casă,* bulg. *kâšta,* srb. *kuča,* alban. *shtëpi,* engl. *house,* allem. *haus*), *feu* (roum. *foc*), *fumée* (roum. *fum*), *foyer* (roum. *vatră,* alban. *vátër*), qui peuvent eux-aussi l'indiquer.

Conclusions

Il y a plusieurs rapprochements possibles entre l'unité sociale française appelée *maisnie* et les autres unités sociales similaires du sud-est de l'Europe.

Tout d'abord le contexte historique trouble qui, d'après les historiens, a vu naître et par la suite va renforcer *la maisnie*, ressemble fortement à celui que le sud-est européen à connu tout au long de son histoire. Balayée à de nombreuses reprises par des grandes vagues migratoires, confrontée par la suite à la conquête ottomane mais aussi à d'incessantes luttes qui opposent par endroits les différentes formations tribales entre elles, la région a connu une histoire bardée de conflits permanents qui se poursuivent jusqu'à l'époque contemporaine[17]. C'est dans ce climat d'incertitude et de conflit permanent, et même grâce à lui, que « la plus petite unité sociale » a survécue ici plus qu'ailleurs en Europe, au point d'arriver dans certains régions (le Kosovo par exemple), jusqu'à nos jours[18]. Un des signes visibles de ce climat d'insécurité est celui des habitations fortifiées. Celles que l'on retrouve chez les populations du sud-est européen (Albanais, Grecs, Slaves du sud ; même chez les Roumains, mais moins nombreuses et surtout parmi les classes aisées.) portent le nom de *koula*. Au XIXe siècle, on les érigeait encore[19].

Le groupe domestique s'organise autour d'un chef qui occupe le rôle central aussi bien dans la maisnie française que dans toutes les autres unités sociales similaires. La plupart du temps c'est un homme élu selon sa position, selon son âge et ses qualités qui l'ont fait remarquer. C'est à lui de prendre toutes les décisions concernant le groupe (de distribuer les tâches de chacun, les ressources, de décider si le groupe entre dans un conflit etc.). Tous les membres du groupe et même l'unité sociale tout entière portent son nom et doivent lui obéir.

Au sein des unités sociales les membres sont liés entre eux par une forte solidarité (morale et économique), qui donne l'unité du groupe mais également une

[17] Voir les ouvrages de synthèse de Georges Castellan (1999) et Michel Sivignon (2009).

[18] Voir l'étude du sociologue albanais, récemment disparu, Gjergji Rrapi (2003).

[19] Voir l'étude récente et richement illustrée de l'architecte albanais Flamur Doli (2009), mais aussi l'ouvrage plus ancien de Aleksandar Deroko (1974).

responsabilité collective (Stahl 1978: 156). Les anciens textes français parlaient de « maignies de homes » (1282), ou « mesnies de hommes » (1296), comme s'il s'agissait des personnes individuelles, des esclaves. Ce sont des possessions, que l'on détient. On les achète, on les vend, on les reçoit ou bien on les offre : « Item a Vohec et a la Vau vint et deus maignees de homes o les hers et leurs biens au pris de vint et deus livres de rente » (1310), « huit maignies de homes liquel sont de franc aleuf » (1312), « tient quinze maignies d'omes de moi, les queles quinze maignies je tien dou conte de Borgoigne et sunt essises a Escurcey et Attechant delez Blammont » (1315) « justice, maisons, mex, granges, forteresses, colombiers, molin, maignies de hommes et de femmes » (1469, acte de vente) (Godefroy 1888: 294). Ces textes nous rappellent le cas des paysans roumains chez qui les relations avec le seigneur étaient toujours traités au nom de la maisnie (*gospodărie*). Plus encore, tous les membres de la même maisnie (*gospodărie*) pouvaient perdre leur liberté une fois leur chef devenu serf ; ou bien la situation inverse était possible, ils retrouvaient leur liberté une fois leur chef ayant acheté la sienne (Stahl 1978: 156-158).

La solidarité et la responsabilité collective existent aussi bien au niveau de la maisnie, qu'à celui des autres unités sociales, plus larges. Le meilleur exemple est celui de la vendetta. Appelée *faide* pour le Moyen Age français[20] on peut encore le rencontrer de nos jours dans les anciennes régions tribales de Monténégro et d'Albanie (alban. *gjakmarrja*)[21].

A part ces similarités majeures existantes entre la maisnie française et les autres unités sociales correspondantes du sud-est de l'Europe, on peut aussi identifié certains aspects secondaires légèrement différents. C'est le cas, par exemple, des personnes qui rentre dans sa composition. Comme on a pu le voir, de *la maisnie* arrivent, avec le temps, à en faire partie également des personnes étrangères au groupe apparenté, comme c'est le cas des domestiques et des esclaves. Pour les populations pauvres des paysans du sud-est européen, leur présence est un fait rare. On les rencontre plutôt dans les villes où chez les paysans qui commencent avec le temps à accumuler des richesses. La présence des mercenaires, même dans les sociétés tribales secouées par des conflits incessants, n'est pas signalée dans la région.

Ceci étant dit, j'espère avoir apporté par ce bref passage en revue de *la maisnie,* les réponses nécessaires pour écarter la plupart des questions soulevées autour de ce terme et de sa présence dans les Sciences Sociales actuelles. Peut-être ai-je également réussi à soulever des nouvelles questions, cette fois sur des rapprochements possibles entre *la maisnie* médiévale française et les autres unités sociales similaires du sud-est ou d'ailleurs en Europe. Dans ce sens, des

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[20] A ce sujet voir Jacques Flach (1893: 447-454) et Marc Bloch (1968: 186-192).

[21] A ce sujet voir Christopher Boehm (1984) et Patrizia Resta (2002).

investigations plus poussées sur le travail et la propriété commune au groupe seraient salutaires. Les rapports étroits et à la fois complexes existants entre *la maisnie* et *la manse* nécessiteraient une attention toute particulière. Je passe la tâche d'approfondir ces incitantes questions d'histoire sociale à tous ceux intéressés.

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The Romanian Family during the Communist Regime Legislative Continuity and Change

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Abstract: The formula "The family – the base cell of the society" has never been more meaningful than during the communist period. The state policy regarding the family, meant to charge it with the responsibilities of giving birth to and educating the "new man", regulated the life of individuals down to the details regarding their intimate life – citizens turned into comrades. The present study follows the evolution of the laws regarding the family throughout the whole communist period (1948 – 1989) in two aspects: on one hand it analyzes the laws and their features and, on another hand, it integrates the communist laws in the Romanian pre- and post-communist legislative context. Such a structure serves our intention of not just drawing the particular context of the studied period, but to reveal, on a long term, the features of this system which worked for more than 50 years, features which brought the Romanian communist society its undesired fame and made it unique.

Keywords: communist family, Civil Code of 1865, Family Code of 1954, marriage, divorce, abortion, children's allowance, maternal leave, child care system

1. The context of the research

The historiography of Romanian communism is full of writings, most of them appeared after 1990 and dedicated mainly to the political and social dimension of the regime, to its repressive and concentrative character, to the cult of personality. The reproductive policy of the regime has attracted not only Romanian researchers, but mostly foreign ones, the most well known books or studies on Romanians during the communist period coming from the researches of foreign specialists (Denis Deletant, Keith Hitchins, Gail Kligman and others). The regulations reinforced by the new political system were also studied, both historically and from the perspective of juridical or social studies (see Ghebrea 2004, Pădurean 2010). However, what we still miss form the perspective of family history studies, is an insertion of the communist laws regarding the family in the long string of juridical documents which regulated Romanians' private life in the modern era. We consider this mandatory because the laws elaborated by communists had a dual character: on one hand the coomunists introduced a series of regulations that broke the traditional family living but, on another hand, they focused precisely on this traditional character in an attempt to preserve the family as the main institution of the private society. The truth is that, regardless of all criticism, the Family Code of 1954, with relatively few updates, is still effective today, more than 20 years after the regime has changed. This might be due to the fact that there are some features (functions) which assured the continuity of the family, in spite of its age as an institution: the economical, the sexual and reproductive ones, the educational one, the preservation of cultural identity (Goody 2003: 11).

The change of the Romanian political climate occurred in 1948 was going to represent the debut of an extremely complicated period in Romanian family life. The 50 years of socialist policy were going to produce, while trying to build the multilaterally developed society, a series of ruptures from the old Romanian society, ruptures which were going to be heavily seen in the private, family life. The forced industrialization, the marked and permanent increase of the work force, led to the first break from the past: the large rural families are dislocated in order to allow their members to occupy the jobs offered by the party. Young people, attracted by the mirage of the city, by the comfort of living in a block, wish those jobs and leave the villages. The small nuclear family, more and more numerous as a social structure, lives farther and farther away from the large family, from the descendency group it came from. Until this point, we closely follow the model Goody described as being specific to European socialism (Goody 2003: 178). However, the changes occur not just in the inhabiting form; a series of accumulation from the period between the wars had opened the way for some of the most important changes in the Romanian society. Here we talk about the leaps in the field of women emancipation, leaps on which the whole set of legislative regulations that were going to lead to what Mihaela Miroiu called "the depersonalization of the woman in communism" (Miroiu 2003) was going to superimpose. We agree that the regulations of the communist regime took by assault the family life of Romanians, but we would rather believe that the aim of this assault was more to reset the society on bases different from the traditional ones and not to break the social family order, according to Gail Kligman (Kligman 2000: 57). The break described and proved by the American author in her book look more as a result and not as a purpose of this policy. Actually, the base function of the family in communism, as described in the Family Code, is to perpetuate the population – a principle found at the base of the traditional family.

The period between the wars marks the debut of the emancipation of Romanian women, who passes from the stage of housewife to that of a lady in the society. Apparently minor aspects – like the right of wearing trousers, of cutting their hair, of making sport – become rights gained by the feminist movement. The intellectual emancipation follows the personal one. Of course, the emancipation of women was a movement which started from the upper levels, from the ladies of the high society, who had contacts in Europe, who had post-graduate degrees, who frequented several influence groups. It was also true that the great mass of women was still represented wives and mothers, some of them taught in the "housewives schools" or in the girls pensions, others, just a small part, having various jobs. The big leap occurs at the beginning of the communist period, following the law regarding the restructuration of teaching from august 1948, the women becoming the beneficiaries of mass education efforts. Following all these accumulations, the idea of the affection-based family also comes from the period between the wars.

2. The evolution of the legal system regarding the family until 1948

Until the creation of the modern national unitary state following World War I, the legislatives and the laws have been different for the areas inside and outside the Carpathians. Even after this moment, regardless of all the institutional and legal unification in the 1920s, the civil life remained governed by different laws. In Transylvania, for instance, the Civil Laws of 1894 remained effective until 1943, with just the articles regarding the civil state papers being abrogated.

In the Romanian Principalities, the family life was regulated by the Civil Code elaborated by the administration of Alexandru Ioan Cuza in 1865. Cuza's Civil Code replaced the Calimah Code, effective in Moldavia since 1817 and the Caragea Law, effective in Valachia since 1818 (see Vasile 2009). At the same time, in Transylvania, the situation was marked by the more complex aspects of the state – church dualism in what concerned the regulation of private life. Moreover, given the political and juridical statute, the state – church dualism was completed both by the civil – military dualism and by the complexity of the ethnical configuration (see the excellent Introductive Study in Bolovan et al. 2010). The Austrian Civil Code, applied in Transylvania only since 1853, had a short living, the onset of the liberal regime in 1860 ceasing its validity. Then, as double monarchy was divided in influence areas, a series of civil and ecclesiastical laws followed, regulating the matrimonial life. It was only in 1894 when the civil laws made the civil matrimony compulsory, transferring all the authority concerning the family life to the laic authorities (Bolovan et al. 2009). The civil legislation was introduced in 1894 and, suprisingly, these Austro-Hungarian laws regulated the matrimonial life until 1943, when the Civil Code regulations are extended in Transilvania.

Therefore, before 1948, the family life was regulated by the Civil Code of 1865 which remained the main piece of the Romanian legislation for the last 150 years. It was inspired and adapted from the French Civil code of 1804 and would undergo a series of modifications throughout the years – including massive attempts at replacing it completely – but it virtually remained the same until nowadays! The series of Constitutions, since the 1923 one and until the 2003 one left the task of regulating the matrimonial and family life on the Civil code. The 1954 Family Code, the law that was going to regulate the family life of Romanians for the past 60 years, would replace just the first part of the Civil Code, About Persons, placing at the base of the socialist family the principles the communists believed in.

2.1. The Civil Code of 1865

Issued in 1864 and effective since 1865, the Romanian Civil Code remains the most important law regarding the civil life in Romania. Carol I kept it unaltered, as did Ferdinand. In 1943, in the context of World War II. The Civil Code was eventually inforced in Transylvania. This is why we would rather start the legislative contextualization with the act that stood at the base of the national unitary life since 1918 than insist on Transylvanian civil and ecclesiastical laws. The Civil Code adopted under the lead of Cuza would undergo a series of modifications and updates to fit the spirit of the time but would still remain the main piece of the Romanian civil law (see all modifications to the Civil Code in Vasile 2009).

Like the society which produced it, the Civil Code is essentially paternalist, proclaiming the power of the father over his wife and family, the power of man over woman. We believe that the most important aspect derived from the Civil Code that fits the aim of the present study comes from the importance given to the families the spouses come from at the time of marriage. When we talk about the traditional way a couple was formed, we talk about how parents do not just approve but also actually often choose the partner of their child, following, economical, social or personal reasons. The Civil Code states that young people of legal age to get married – 18 years for men and 15 years for women – should present before the authorities the *respectful and formal* agreement act from their parents (art. 134). That agreement was addressed to the parents, through the mayor (local authority); the parents' answer was expected within one month; the procedure was to be repeated two more time in three moths if the parents failed to reply. In the absence of a positive answer, equivalent to an approval of marriage, the young people can marry without the above mentioned act, but only if they are over the age of 25 (men) and 21 (women) and presenting proofs that the act had been forwarded. Therefore, young people under this age could not marry without the consent of their parents (this article would be modified at the 1906 revision, giving those who turned 21 the right of getting married without their parents' permission (Vasile 2009: 131).

Actually, the consent of the family does not concern just the marriage, but also the divorce. In the event of a mutual divorce – accepted as a solution of the marriage dissolution in special circumstances – the spouses had to bring to the court the original act in which the parents, knowing the reasons why their son/daughter requested the divorce, authorized them to proceed. Article 257 stated that under no circumstances the mutual agreement of spouses would be sufficient without the approval of the father, mother, or other living ascendants (art. 257). We also have to note the power of article 129 which does not acknowledge the marriage realized without the mutual agreement of the spouses. In short, at the time of marriage, apart from the will of the two young people to get married, the written consent of the parents was absolutely necessary for those under 25/21 and remained just a occasional act for those above the mentioned age. Given the implications of authorities in presenting and forwarding this official act to parents we consider that the private aspect of marriage was largely overtaken by its public, official one.

Chapter VI of the Civil Code refers to the rights and duties of the husbands and proclaims the authority of man in the family. Article 195 states that the woman should obey her husband, while article 196 obliges her to follow her husband wherever he considered appropriate. Also the woman could not sue anyone without the consent of her husband, unless the court listened to why the husband did not agree and decided accordingly.

By marrying, the spouses get under the obligation of *feeding, supporting and educating their children* (art. 85). At the same time, they have to offer each other faith, support and help (art. 194).

Although the authority of man in the family is more than stated in the legal text, the woman has the right of filing for divorce, legally called "separation". In the event of adultery, the woman, as well as the man, can request the trial the separation (art. 211). The other divorce reasons accepted by the legislator (cruelty, excesses, severe insults) are also accepted when coming from the wife (art 212). Reasons like attempts at the other's life or "enmity" are readily accepted as sufficient (art. 215).

We should notice the high importance of the fact that the legislator granted the couple the possibility of mutually deciding about the dissolution of marriage;

following the legal steps, the spouses could file a mutual consent "that should serve as proof that their life together is unbearable and, according to them, this is a strong reason for separation" (art. 214). The legislator stated that, regardless of the age, the child had to honor and respect his/her parents, under whose authority he/she remained until emancipation or becoming of age. Emancipation usually occurred at the age of 18 or at the time of marriage, while becoming of age happened at 21. Until then, the father even had the right of requesting the arrest of his child in case of disobedience. According to the law, the parent could request the arrest and imprisonment of the child for up to one month if he/she was under 16; after this age, the period of imprisonment could be extended up to six months (art. 330, 331). It is worth mentioning that the arrest occurred following just the explicit request of the parent, without a prior trial of the causes that led to that request, while the parent had the obligation to pay for the food and "accommodation" of the disobedient child!

If the couples who wanted to divorce had children, the law state that they should remain in the custody of the father throughout the period of the trial unless the court, considering various reasons regarding the well-being of children, decided differently (art. 249). If during the marriage the wife had to follow her husband wherever he wanted to settle, once the divorce was filed by any of the parts, the woman had the right of leaving the man's house and to claim an alimony that was proportional to the revenues of the man.

Adapted over the years to fit the spirit of the time, the Civil Code transferred the marriage to the laic authorities, the only ones entitled to realize a marriage and to grant its public recognition. The 1923 Constitution, through article 22, enforces that the civil marriage is valid in front of the laws of the state, the state ignoring all protests of the church in this matter. This Code became effective in Transylvania only since September 15th 1943, as stated by Law no. 389 of June 22nd of the same year.

3. The context of changes in family legislation

Since the introduction of the Civil Code in 1865 and until the 1947, the Romanian society passed through two devastating wars, through political and social changes that have definitely influenced the everyday life of the average citizen. Family life began and ended according to the updated Civil Code, the dowry was still an important factor in contracting a marriage, with the marriage itself actually being a civil contract. The family continues to play an important role in the young people choices, still having the right to oppose to the marriage even if, for those of age, the parents' consent was not mandatory any more. In the period between the wars, the civil marriage remains the only officially accepted way of forming a family. A family that was still a patriarchal one, with the husband being the head: he has the lead, assures the economical stability and has a power of decision that is granted by the law. The woman, his consort, deals with the administrative matters and is the mother of his children. If she lives in the city she has a social life; if she lives in the country, she is the slave of her husband (Vasile 2009; Pârvulescu 2009).

At the same time, compared to the period before World War I, in the period between the wars the number of divorces shows a significant increase, with a larger percentage of marriages that broke after less than five years (Scurtu, 2003). However, a revolution in terms of rights occurs for the first time in 1929, when women are given the right to vote locally and then, before World War II, when the 1938 Constitution gives women the right to vote for the parliament. This was the situation in 1947, when the communists took the power.

Equality was a key principle in the civic conduit of socialist states. Engaged on a radical process of changing the society, on a soviet path, the communist power used the laws in order to realize the partnership between state and society, an almighty state and a totally subdued society. The life and death of individuals were given the same value as the distribution of tasks for achieving the five-year plans. An almighty state, as the Romanian one tried to be, had to be based on many subordinated individuals. Many and subordinated – these are the key words. Both of them – multiplication and subordination – were carried out through law and through the terror of law.

4. The communist period: legislative path regarding the family

The process of regulation of the family life in socialism resided in a series of legal acts, laws and decrees which either reinforced previous laws - like the decree 462 of 1948, or introduced new legal principles. At the end of this study we shall see in what extent these meant a continuity or a change compared to the old laws. In order to follow all the steps of the changes the society went through as the new laws were being introduced, we opted for a chronological approach.

Following both the demographical decrease after World War II and the idea that that a powerful state has to be based on many citizens, the first measure regarding the population was one that had to support its growth: the revision of the decree regarding the abortion.

In 1940, there were 10341 fetal death for 414235 live births (Calahan 1970). Gail Kligman reproduces – without citing – the words of a gynecologist according to who in the private practices in Bucharest a doctor would perform an average of three abortions per day in the period between the wars (Kligman 2000, 57). The recourse to abortion seems to be specific to the privileged segment of the urban population; there were few women who could afford the "luxury" of turning to a doctor to perform a pregnancy interruption. However, there are no official statistics that would bring any proof that might give us an idea about the size of the phenomenon. On another hand, the average number of children a woman had decreased from 4 – before World War II – to 3 in the years after (Mureşan 1999, 147). The communist state started out the process of demographic support through coercive measures: the first step was to revise the article 482 of the Penal Code, incriminating the abortion. Compared to all previous studies – including Kligman, who considered the forbidding the abortion in 1948 was a premiere following the moscovite model – we have to point out that the first legal measures against abortion are to be found in the first juridical acts of Valachia and Moldova in the first half of 19th Century (see Roman 2007) and also in the Penal Code of 1865, in article 246 (modified by the law of February 17th, 1874) which introduced punishments for all those who deliberately induced the interruption of pregnancy, either with or without the woman's consent. Self-understood, the law punished the doctors, the surgeons, the midwives, the pharmacists and all those who proved to be guilty of complicity to interrupt the pregnancy (1865 Penal code, art. 246). Subsequently, the 1936 Penal Code, adopted under Carol II, punished (through the same article 482) "the crime of abortion, regardless of the fact that it is realized with or without the consent of the pregnant woman" (see Rotar 2008 for a valuable evaluation of the social impact of the decree). Article 484 settled the exceptions that allowed for a pregnancy interruption. First of all, the prosecutor's office could authorize a pregnancy interruption "following the request of the doctor, to avoid an imminent danger threatening the woman's life". Then abortion was also allowed if the pregnancy was aggravating a preexistent condition, again threatening the woman's life and, thirdly, if any of the parents suffered from any debility that might have transmitted to the child (Penal Code, art. 482, 484). The revision of article 482 of the Penal Code (we have to point one more time that, up to that moment, in terms of legislation, the communists had not created anything; they just reissued the 1936 Penal Code under the name The Penal Code of the Popular Republic of Romania), realized in 1948, was made under the circumstances of the decrease of living births. The law was not invented, it had existed since 1936; the revised article 482 defined the abortion as being "the crime committed by those who, using any means, interrupts the normal course of pregnancy". There was a distinction between the "abortion committed without the woman's consent" – which was punished with correctional imprisonment from 2 to 5 months – "the abortion committed by the pregnant, unmarried woman herself, or who gave her consent to someone else to cause it" – correctional imprisonment from 3 to 6 months – and "the one committed or consented to by the married woman" – punished with correctional imprisonment from 6 months up to one year. The medically authorized abortions, under the conditions stated by the 1936 Penal Code, were not punished. Again, the doctors had the possibility to decide about interrupting the pregnancy. Given this succession of coercitive legislation regarding abortion, given the continuity of the prohibition of this birth control method, the surprise expressed by some authors about the lack of effects following the revision of article 482, since the number of living birth did not increase in the rhythm expected by the authorities, was not justified at all; the communist laws brought nothing new in this field, the abortion had also been incriminated before 1948 and, likewise, the doctors had the great authority of deciding about the opportunity of this intervention.

We have to underline that the revision of the Penal Code was done even before the first constitution of the Popular Republic Romania. The Penal Code was republished in the Official Monitor no. 48 from February 28th, 1948; the text of the Constitution was published two months later, in April 1948. Although the principles of the equality between genders – the real turnover of the values of the past society – had surely been prepared beforehand, they were made public after the revision of the article regarding the abortion. Article 16 stated that "all citizens of the Popular Republic of Romania, regardless of gender, nationality, race, religion or cultural level are equal in front of the law". Following the same logic, article 21 grants women the same rights as men, reinforcing article 16: "The woman has rights equal to those of man in all fields of state, economical, social, cultural – political and private law life. For the same work, the woman has the right to the same salary as man." After proclaiming the protection that the state offered to the marriage and family (art. 26), the legislator reinforces the protection granted to the mothers and children under the age of 18, who benefit from "special protection, stated by law" (art. 26). The duties of the parents are equal, both for children born inside and outside the marriage (art. 26).

The 1952 Constitution reinforces the principle of equality between genders, article 83 referring to the same rights proclaimed by the legislator in 1948, but developing the fields in which this equality manifests itself: "the woman has the same rights as man in work, salary, rest, social insurance and teaching". The protection the state granted to the family, to the interests of mothers and children is also reaffirmed! It was for the first time when a legal text referred to the support for mothers with many children and for single mothers, to the paid holiday for pregnant women, to the organization of maternities, nurseries and orphanages (art. 83). However, unlike the previous constitutional texts, including the 1948 one, the new law turns over the relation between the individual and the state. Thin inversion of the normal relations, in favor of the state, comes from the way the fundamental rights and freedoms granted by the constitution were expressed and guaranteed, the words "citizens' rights and freedoms" being turned into "rights and obligations", but only in chapter VII out of X (we have to consider that all previous Constitutions listed the rights and freedoms immediately following the articles regarding the state territory). At the same time, the rights were only granted on the condition that they were exerted "according to the interest of the working people and for the reinforcement of the popular democracy regime" (art. 85). The introduction of certain restriction in the exertion of the "guaranteed" rights would gradually lead to the impossibility of their actual exertion, accentuating the state of disorganization of the personal life and of fatalism characteristic to that period. The individuals had to "conform" and display a "formal" integration with the values and norms that were coercively reinforced by the communist state (Banciu 2001: 218).

We have to underline that, in 1952, following the cleansing process, Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej was trying hardly to put the policy of the Republic on the way that Moscow had defined; therefore, the Constitution drew the main lines of this orientation by stipulating in its very preamble that the birth of the RPR was due to the USSR which had removed the fascist yoke. At the same time, all the rights that were stipulated by the Constitution were nothing more than spread dust compared to the Law of Work from May 30, 1950 which, under the euphemism "temporary work service", hid the forced work to which all those who had opposed the regime in a way or another were condemned. By the end of 1952, the work camp were totaling over 80000 people, half of them being used in the construction of the Danube – Black Sea Channel (Deletant 1999: 503).

4.1. The Family Code (1954)

The principles of the equality between men and women in the public sphere, stipulated in the first two communist origin Constitutions were going to be extended to the field of private life – the equality between woman and man in the family – since they were legalized through the family Code, the law that regulated the marriage and family relations, effective February 1st 1954. The 1865 Civil Code, which was basically a paternalist one, assured, as we saw, the supremacy of man regarding that family life meant. Settled by law in the position of *head* of the family, the man decides in everything that concerns the life together and the woman has to listen to him. Unlike the 1865 law, the Family Code the communists adopted proclaimed the full equality between man and woman in everything regarding the marriage. The Family Code was based on three main principles: the free agreement of the future spouses regarding the marriage, the principle of full equality of spouses in the rights and obligations in the personal and patrimonial relations and, following the transfer of authority from the individual patriarchate to the state patriarchate (Miroiu 2003), the principle of the care of the state for the marriage and family (Albu 1988: 6, 7).

The analyze of the rules in the Family Code shows that the main break from tradition in the field of family life occurred at this moment, by putting the 3 principles at the base of family life. The fundamental change came from bringing the woman on position where she was equal to man (art. 25) and from removing any family (parents, grandparents, tutors) intervention over marriage. The spouses mutually agree about where the would stay and live (let us remember that in 1865 it was stipulated that the woman had to follow her man wherever he deemed necessary); all goods acquired during marriage became common goods and each spouse had to bring a contribution proportional to his/her possibilities to support the family expenses. The spouses had to care for each other and offer mutual support when needed and were equally responsible for the accumulated debts. If we compare the above mentioned stipulations to those of the 1865 Civil Code, it is clear that the new law concerning the matrimonial life breaks the tradition of the supremacy of the husband in the family, of the man in private life, this democratization off family life totally turning over the previous relations, at least at a formal, declarative level (in the real life, especially in the rural area, the situation was not exactly like that; the studies realized after the revolution showed that the social conditions called for and legitimated the dependency towards men, in spite of the equalitarian declarations – Băban 1994: 12). At the same time, the extension of the state protection over the family life meant, at least at a declarative level, the introduction of economical and social measures with the purpose of assuring the stability and familial cohesion in order to allow the family to fulfill its functions: "to perpetuate the population, to raise, educate and form the young generation for the social life" (Albu 1988: 8). This principle would subsequently justify the intervention of the state in the most intimate details of family life; likewise, through the subsequent coercive measures, the family with children (preferably as many as possible) was going to be considered the model of the communist family. The official ideology considered that the need of care for the marriage and family had found its consecration in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, according to which "the family represents the natural and fundamental element of the society and has the right to be protected by the society and by the state". "This protection does not aim to nationalize the marriage and the family, but only to create the material and spiritual premises to avoid the family being *a closed cell, like in the past*, but a cell that can organically integrate in the society" (Albu 1988 :8).

According to the family code, the legal age for marriage is 18 for men and 16 (15 in exceptional cases) for women (art. 4). An element of novelty in the Romanian matrimonial law was the obligation to mutually declare the state of health, those suffering from certain conditions being forbidden to marry (art. 10). The marriage can only be done in front of the representative of the civil state service of the locality in which at least one of the spouses lives (art. 11). Article 16 – the one considered to represent the main break in the matrimonial law – stipulates the mutual agreement of the future spouses as an essential premise of the marriage and obliges them to be personally present at the civil state service to express their agreement personally and in public (art. 16). Potential oppositions to the marriage are also considered; where applicable, they have to be written, pointing out the evidence that sustains them (art. 14), while the civil state representative has to check them out and deny the marriage if the legal criteria are not met (art. 15). The paper attesting the marriage is the marriage certificate, which is issued based on the papers filled in at the civil state register (art. 18).

Equally revolutionary to article 16 – which removes the need for the parents' consent for the children's marriage – are article 25 – which, taking the stipulations of the effective Constitution, introduces the equality between spouses: "the man and the woman have equal rights and obligations in the marriage" (Family Code, art. 25) – and 26 – which stipulates that the spouses have to mutually decide in everything concerning the marriage. All the patrimonial rights and obligations of the spouses (detailed in articles 29 – 36), among which the mutual contribution to the household expenses (art. 29) and the quality of common goods given to the goods acquired during the marriage (art. 30) come from these two articles.

Chapter IV of the Family Code concerns the break of the matrimonial link. Article 37 stipulates the three situations that can lead to the end of a marriage: the death of one of the spouses, the legally declared death of one of the spouses and divorce. We are interested in the divorce, since the subsequent evolution of the laws was going to introduce the real break from the past in this aspect (see below, Decree 779 from 1966). If we take the law literally, it seems permissive when it stipulates that any of the spouses can file for divorce when, because of justified reasons, the marriage can not go on (we base this idea on the lack of researches on the divorce cases of the period; as we already know, the law and the real practice are not always the same). Unlike the 1865 Code but consistent with law 18/1948, the legislator does not specify the reasons that can lead to divorce, leaving the decision to the court. But, unlike the same Code, the new law puts the interests of children in the first place when the reasons that motivate the divorce request are being considered (art. 38). The other articles of the law (art. 39 – 44) stipulate the relations between the future former spouses – alimony until the divorce is pronounced, alimony until a new marriage of the man who, because of a work impairment occurred during or before marriage is not able to support himself, the custody of the under age children given to one of the parents – after listening to children above 10 and with the implication of the tutelary authority, the rights and obligations of the divorced parents towards their children.

Title II of the Family Code is dedicated to family relationships, the legislator stipulating the following about descendants: towards the mother (coming from birth – art. 47), towards the father – settling the rule that the child born during the marriage has the husband of the mother as father (art. 53) but bringing into discussion the possibility that the husband may challenge the paternity in the first six months after the child was born; the paternity of children born outside the marriage, which is acquired through the father's recognition, materialized in a declaration given at the civil state service (art. 57). If the father's recognition is challenged by others (including the mother) the child – in the name of who the mother acts – has the right of requesting the clarification of paternity in the first year after birth (art. 60). There are also stipulated situations when the paternity clarification process could be started out under different circumstances than those seen in art. 60. We find a particular interest in art. 63 from the section that regulates the legal situation of the child, this article stipulating that "a child born outside the marriage but whose descendency has been established by recognition or by a court decision has, towards the parent and his relatives, , the same legal situation as a child born inside the marriage". In the 19th Century and at the beginning of the 20th , a child born outside the marriage had to bear the burden of being a bastard for all of his life (Dumănescu 2006).

If in the 1865 Civil Code the task for educating the child was the father's responsibility who, when needed, was entitled to ask even for the child to be arrested, the new Family Code sets the interests of the child as the main principle driving the rights and obligations of the parents towards their under age children. The law does not differentiate between children born inside the marriage, outside the marriage or adopted children. Both parents have the same rights and obligations towards their children, regardless of the context of their birth. A parent takes all the parently rights only if the other one has died, has been legally denied the parently rights, put under interdiction or unable to exert his will (art. 98). Should misunderstandings arise between parents regarding the exertion of parently rights, the tutelary authority is the only one able to decide – after listening to the parents – what's best for the child. Among the obligation of the parents towards their under age children we find: raising them, the care for their health and physical development, their education, their professional preparation, according to the inclinations of the child but "according to the aims of the popular – democratic state, in order to make him / her useful to the community" (art. 101). The child who turns 14 and wishes to take a different way in his school trajectory than the one set by his parents can apply to the tutelary authority, which may agree after listening to all those involved (art. 102). Article 104 stipulates that the tutelary authority may ask a court to entrust the child to be raised in an institution or by another person – with his agreement – if it considers that the physical, moral or intellectual development of the child is in danger of being affected in the parents' house (art. 104). From the point of view of the patrimonial relationships, article 106 stipulates that the parent has no right over the child's goods and nor does the child over the parents' goods, except for the right of heir and support.

The insertion of the state in the family life was done, at this point, through the tutelary authority. This institution had – according to article 108 – to exert a effective and continuous control over the way that parent fulfilled their obligations towards their children. The representatives of the tutelary authority had the right to visit the children at home, "to be informed through any means about how they are cared for… according to the aims of the popular – democratic state" (art. 108). This freedom legally granted to an institution of the state, empowered to take away children in cases that did not "conform" shows that, more than belonging to their parents and families, children were seen as a good of the state, requiring care and who had to be raised according to the interests of this paternalist state.

4.2. The legislation between 1953 and 1989 (abortion, divorce, various state's aids for mothers and families with children, maternity leave)

Between 1953 and 1956 the state would preoccupy for the protection of the family and women, issuing a series of decrees which either amended older juridical articles or set new legislative principles. Following the same chronological order which we preferred for the present study we note Decree 456 of October 19th 1955, which removed the criminal attribute associated to the abortion, under the condition that is was performed by a doctor and in those cases where the pregnancy was a potential risk for the woman's health (*Colection 1955*: Decree 456). In the evolution of the laws regarding the interruption of pregnancy and in the tradition of Romanian law regarding this aspect we face the first break: for the first time, abortion is taken out of the criminal sphere and accepted as a medical act performed in order to save the woman. This is the very year when abortion was legalized in the USSR, after the 19 years when Stalin had forbidden it. Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej had discretely started to step away from Moscow. The only article of the decree stipulates that "the interruption of the normal course of pregnancy performed by a doctor for medical reasons, namely when the continuation of the pregnancy endangers the woman's life or when one of the parent is suffering from a severe hereditary disease is not considered to be an abortion" (*Collection* 1955).

1956 was going to bring new premieres: the establishing of kindergartens (Decree 368/1956) and the onset of the first state financial aid for children (Decree 571/1956). The kindergartens, according to the law, had nothing to do with the education of children; according to their definition, these state institutions were meant "to allow the mothers to participate in the productive and in the cultural - social activity" (art. 19). The kindergartens were organized in such a way to allow women to work; a 9 – 11 hours working program was considered to be a normal one, the 6 hours one was a reduced program, while for women in the countryside seasonal kindergartens, that were opened in the period when the field had to be worked, were organized. The parents had to contribute proportionally to their income, with an exception: those earning less than 250 lei did not have to pay anything. Another special category was represented by the weekly kindergartens – their program was from Monday morning to Saturday afternoon – which were destined for the students, commuters, all those who could not take their children back home at the end of the working program. The kindergartens could also be organized beside factories, production units – including agricultural units – universities, namely wherever such a child caring institution in the absence of parents was needed.

The second premiere of the regime was the onset of the first financial aid for children, the state allowance. Article 1 of the Decree showed why the allowances were necessary: "in order to raise the living level of employees and pensioners with children". The allowance was given to the families in which one of the parents met the following criteria: a permanent employee of a state institution, pensioner, military – if he had been employed prior to joining the army, working student, a person with a physical handicap. Also taken into consideration for the state allowance were the children of writers, artists, painters, sculptors and composers on the conditions that they were affiliated to professional unions and the children who benefited from the heir pension. Excluded from the payment of the allowance were the families of the owners of small businesses: those who had revenues from commerce, had alcohol distilleries, tractors, wool processors, oil presses or peasant mills (art. 3). Article 5 excluded those who benefited from scholarships and the children who were raised by the state or communities. Actually, the state allowance for children, as it was set in 1956, was to be benefited of only by those working in the state industry, a form of aid for working people with children.

Article 3 set the amount of the allowance – 100 lei per child, the age until it was paid – 14, depending on the salary or pension of the parent. If the salary was under 1200 lei per month, the father (entitled by law to cash the allowance – with some exceptions) received the allowance for all of his children. If the salary was between 1201 and 1500 lei he would get the allowance only from the second child; from the third child in case the salary was between 1501 and 2000 lei; only from the fourth child for those having salaries over 2000 lei. The decree stipulated both the way the allowance was granted – 3 month after employment for an undefined period (art. 13) and the conditions that could lead to the cancelling of the allowance: more than 3 unjustified absences from work in a month resulted in no allowance being paid for that month; if the employee requested for an unpaid holiday in addition to the 15 days of legal holiday as stipulated by the Work Code he would also lose the allowance for that month. Hence, losing the job meant losing also the state allowance for children. This decree was going to undergo a series of modifications throughout the 45 years, the most important, which should be discussed at the right moment, being the one occurred in 1960.

If the law gave the husbands (fathers) the right to benefit from the state allowance for children, the mothers would be encouraged, in the same year, through the Decision no. 2168 of the Ministerial Committee, to donate mother milk for "feeding the children who do not have the chance of being fed with motherly milk: orphans, children of mothers suffering from tuberculosis, immature children (underdeveloped) (*The Collection* 1956: Decision 2168). The points where the mother milk was collected had been established since 1953. The decision stipulated not just the price of milk (30 lei per liter, in a time when one liter of cow milk was about 1,70 lei!!!), but also set a series of awards based on the quantity of milk donated in a certain period of time. Hence, mothers who donated between 50 and 60 liters in 3 months were awarded 100 lei; those who donated between 51 and 70 liters were awarded 150 lei; those exceeding 70 liters were awarded 200 lei.

The 1956 Hungarian revolution, the uprisings in Poland and GDR, the application of the soviet model of liberalization of abortion rushed Romania to eliminate any restrictions regarding the interruption of the normal course of pregnancy. Without copying the text in the preamble of the 1955 soviet text (the aim of protecting the women form the painful effects of illicit abortions – Coliver and Howiako 1995: 270), the Great National Assembly issues the Decree 463 of September 30th 1957 that allows for pregnancy interruptions (*Collection* 1957: Decree 463). In just two articles, the decree stipulates that "the interruption of the pregnancy can be done at the request of the pregnant woman" (art. 1) and that "the interventions are to be done in state medical units, following the instructions of the Ministry of Health and Social Care" (art. 2). The 1957 act and measure of forbidding abortions in 1966 are the two separate pieces in the whole legislative process regarding the abortion, discussed by most researchers. As recently justified (Rotar 2008) these two moments are rather the peaks than the edges of an otherwise long process in the history of Romanian law! By reducing the whole history of pregnancy interruption to just these two totally opposing moments, the researchers have not just ignored the whole legal tradition in the field (which started with Pravila de la Govora in 1640, continued with Pravila lui Matei Basarab, found again in Legiuirea Caragea or the Calimah Code before being written in the 1865 Penal Code – Rotar 2008: 74) but have also accredited the idea that the interdiction of abortion would be a specifically communist act, these analyzes which were taken out of the context having a premeditated purpose, namely to show how diabolic the regime was! Nevertheless, if we look at the law at least as it evolved since 1865, the 1957 liberalization is actually the moment that breaks with the tradition, legalizing an act that has continuously been, for hundreds of years, under the incidence of criminal laws! Since the whole historiography of the socialist reproductive policy focuses mainly on the two moments (1957 and 1966) we shall not insist on those, especially because of the lack of any novelty elements that we could possibly bring. We just point out that, from the point of view of continuities or ruptures in the legislation regarding the family, the liberalization of abortions in 1957 was the second great rupture point (after the introduction of equalitarian principles in the matrimonial life).

The law regarding family life does not record any significant change until 1960, when Decree 285 regarding the modification of condition for the state allowance for children was issued (Decree 285/August 10th, 1960). Apart from the raise of the threshold under which a state employee could benefit from the allowance for all of his children, the decree introduces the differentiation between the urban and the rural areas (100 lei in the urban area, 50 lei in the rural one). The same article stipulates a series of exceptions from the rule, nominating categories of working people who could benefit from the 100 lei allowance even if they lived in the rural area: those working in mine, drilling, cement industry, sailing and aircraft crew, medical–sanitary and pharmaceutical personnel, military, party presidents and secretaries, namely all those who *were working hard to build the socialism* (art. 3). The maximum age until which a child can receive the allowance remains the same – 14 years (with the same exception regarding the invalidity), only the 1971 decree extending the maximum age for receiving this stimulant to 16 years. The law was going to be constantly modified and completed as the society was planning new five-year targets: with every raise in salaries and every new social category that had to be stimulated or rewarded for the contribution in raising the socialist Romania, the law of the allowances was being modified. Such changes occurred in 1964, 1966, 1968 (including the students families in the categories that received the allowance), 1969 (the amount was raised with 30 lei for those in the first category), 1971, 1977, 1985 (with a simultaneous raise in the state allowances for children, the allowances for mothers with many children and for the wives of those fulfilling the military service – Decree 410/December 26th, 1985).

Decision no. 880/1965 introduces, under the name of "maternity allowance" the maternity paid leave for pregnancy and confinement as well as for caring for the sick child (*Collection* 1965: Decision 880). The employed woman was entitled to a 112 days paid leave – 52 days before birth and 60 afterwards (art. 14), receiving during this period an allowance that was proportional to her monthly salary and previously length of service. Therefore, if the woman had a length of service of over 12 months, she would receive an allowance of 90% of her salary; 70% for a length of service of 6 to 12 months and 50% for less than 6 months (art. 15). It is also important to note the protection of the job, introduced by article 16, which stipulated that the employer was not allowed to unilaterally cease the contract during the 112 days.

One year after this decree was issued, a Decision of the Ministerial Committee sets the amount of the pregnancy and confinement allowance to 100% of the monthly salary, regardless of the previous length of service for the employees having at least three children. Actually, the year 1966 saw the most laws regarding family and private life, all the 4 important decrees issued then showing Ceaușescu's extraordinary preoccupation to use any measures – both punishments and stimulations – that would lead to the strongly desired raise of birth rate and to the enforcing of the familial institution. October 1966 remains unforgettable in the history of Romanians' private life: over a few days span, the stipulations regarding reproductive life and divorce were going to change, through two decrees that were going to change peoples' lives for the next 23 years. The day of October 1st 1966 puts an end to the period when abortion had been free and even encouraged[1] through Decree 770, which was going to bring Romania the fame of the country with the most severe and absurd reproductive policy in Europe. According to the data processed by Băban, for every living birth there were recorded four abortions, 1,115,000 abortions on reques having beed performed only in that year (Băban 1994: 1). The loss was huge for the paternalist state, considering that "80% of all conceptions were interrupted by abortions" (Băban 1994: 1). Both the stipulations and the effects of Decree 770 are widely known and we have no new data that would justify a detailed approach in the present study. We just want to point that, seen in the light of the break / continuity report, this measure – seen exclusively

1Decision no. 384 of June 26th 1964 of the Ministerial Council regarding the distribution of cashings from sanitary units that performed pregnancy interruptions on request stipulates that 65% of the cashed amounts should return as a stimulent to the medical personnel and only 35% would be used to cover the actual medical costs (Colecția 1964: Decision 184). Subsequently, around 1986, doctors would be paid their full salaries only on the condition that employees from the state industry reached the birth target set by the state (Băban 1994: 1) from the legal point of view and not from the point of view of the effects it caused – brings the policy of the Romanian state back to 1936, when the eugenic and the medical abortions were legitimate. The reversal of the ratio between living births and abortions on request until the target of 4/1 demanded, from the perspective of a state which was trying to reach a population of 30 million in 2000, the enforcement of severe measures of limitation of adverse demographical consequences on a long term. At the same time, especially through the severe consequences on the normal life of individuals caused by this coercive legislation, the 1966 moment gets the particular statute of a unique case in the Romanian family history.

Just a few days after the interdiction of abortions was published, Ceaușescu issues Decree 779 which stipulates the exceptional character of divorce, which was considered to be too permissive in the form it had been stipulated in the Family Code. According to the reformulations of article 37 "marriage ends with the death of one of the spouses or with the legally declared death of one of the spouses". Only in exceptional causes the marriage can be ended through a divorce: "when because of justified reasons the relations between spouses are so severely and irreversibly damaged that the continuation of the marriage is impossible for the one requesting its termination" (art. 38). At the same time, a waiting period is introduced, with the purpose of an attempt of reconciliation, as well as a substantial tax – between 3000 and 6000 lei – with the obvious reason of discouraging the divorce. Actually, as it was written in the reasons for the modifications of this Decree in 1969, "through Decree 779 we got a substantial improvement of the family care and consolidation system" (p. 176). The marked decrease of the number of divorces in 1967, to only 48 (Mureșan 2000: 116), showed that, at least for the moment, the law had reached its target.

The fact that the new leadership of the party was trying to raise the birth rate by any means is also confirmed by Decree 954 of December 1966 regarding the birth allowance. Actually, this decree abrogates article 5 of a 1950 Decree which had set an allowance of 1000 lei form mothers giving birth to the tenth and the following children (*Collection* 1950: Decree 106). "In the spirit of the measures of stimulating the birth rate and of the support of families with several children it is advisable that the allowance be granted to all mothers giving birth to the third and following children" is written in the motivation. Just a few days later came the Decree regarding the increase of income taxes for people without children (*Collection* 1966: Decree 83), which brought a 10% up to 20% (depending on the income and tax payers category) increase in the taxes paid by people older than 25, men and women, regardless of their civil state, who had no children. Excepted were only the invalids, those who could prove that they had children but they had died and those supporting the children from a previous marriage of their spouse. This law, considered by most specialists to be a discriminatory one, together with the other three from the autumn and winter of the same year, represented the state's New Year gift for its citizens, working people from towns and villages!

In 1967 and 1968 the state creates the conditions for the employment with half the normal program for women with children up to 7 years (the Decision of the Ministerial Council no. 54/1967) and extends the state allowance for children for the children of students attending the day courses and of PhD candidates with scholarships (Decree 1045/1968). Until that date, the families of students only benefited from a unique allowance for pregnancy and confinement from the students association with the amount of 750 lei.

Facing the problems created by the application of the articles from the Family Code modified through Decree 779 the state authority issues Law 59/ 1969 which removes the waiting periods in certain cases and reduces the tax to 200 lei. The situation excepted from the waiting period were: mental diseases, the spouse was being legally declared missing, the spouse had left the country for more than two years – a case considered as abandonment of the family, was convicted for attempt of murder on the complaining spouse, has instigated to murder or concealed the truth, has committed an incest or had relations with people of the same gender, has been convicted to at least 3 years in prison for attempt on the state security, murder, infanticide, prostitution, stealing, robbery, fraud, defalcation, forgery. In 1977 the possibility to pronounce the divorce at the first hearing for the cases stipulated by article 113 was introduced (*Collection 1977*: Decree 312).

In the years following the interdiction of abortions, the policy of the Ceauşescu regime towards the population and family has fluctuated continuously, alternating compensatory and punitive measures. Each congress of the Romanian Communist Party brought the raise of salaries and state allowances (in 1985 the allowance had reached 300 lei in the urban area and 200 lei in the rural one) or punitive measures against those who failed to fulfill their duty (to procreate) towards the party and country or who employed illegal actions in order to bypass it. In 1972, letter d of art. 2 of Decree 770 was modified, lowering to 40 the age when a woman could legally request an abortion (Decree 53/1960). In 1982 the age limit went up two years (42) while in 1985, under the conditions in which the fertility had dropped under the generation replacement level (Mureşan 2000: 112) Decree 411 was issued, raising again the age limit to 45 and stipulating five more cases in which the procedure was considered to be legal (see Kligman for the full history of Decree 770 and its modifications). At the same time, the monthly tax of people without children was raised, they having to pay, depending on their monthly wage, between 80 and 925 lei (the preamble of the Decree stated that those without children had the duty to contribute to the raising of funds that were necessary to form and prepare the young generations of citizens). In the same year 1985 an allowance of 1500 lei per month for mothers with more than one child and a supplemental 500 lei one for those with at least five children were introduced. But all these stimulating measures came in a period when the living conditions of the population were constantly degrading (freezing winters without heating, huge queues for food, the "birth rate" terror, the deterioration of medical care and so on).

The first legal measure taken by the national salvation Front in the first day of governing was to abrogate Decree 770 and legalize abortion. A new Constitution was adopted in December 1990, bringing back the fundamental rights, freedoms and obligations of citizens to the place they had been in the democratic constitutions before 1945, in Chapter II, right after the general principles regarding the state of law and the national symbols. Paradoxically, the return to a relaxed legislation regarding divorces did not lead to a spectacular increase of their number, this indicator having the lowest increase among all demographical indicators after 1990 (Rotariu 2010). However, if we refer strictly to the legal text, the changes are substantial: we go back to the freely agreed divorce (in 1993) on the condition the marriage is at least one year old and there are no children. Any of the spouses can file for divorce without the need of bringing any evidence. The reconciliation period was maintained in 1993, however being reduced to only 2 months (Voinea 1996: 67).

Although the principle of caring for the family as the main form of living together was maintained, the marriage rate decreased after 1990, at the same time with the advance of other forms of living together (see Dohotariu 2010). The mutually agreed union or the concubinage situation was recorded as a separate line during the 2002 census and recent studies show that it keeps on gaining a substantial advance, especially for young people. Although the minimum legal age for marriage has remained unchanged, a tendency of delaying the marriage and the moment of having children can be seen. In this context, the fertility has again dropped under the level of generation replacement. The transition towards the statute of being a parent seems to last longer than ever, the factors causing this situation being as various as possible (Hărăguș 2008).

5. Conclusions

Having in mind the entire period before 1947 we conclude that three main breaks occurred in the the family life under the communists: those related to the equality between spouses, to the reproductive life and to divorce. We must also point that the new legislation brought innovations in the sphere of social care, since almost the entire set of supportive measures for families with children (state allowance, paid maternity leave, various aids for mothers with more than one child) were introduced then.

The equality in marriage – this was the most importante rupture from the former family life. If the Civil Code of 1865 had granted the husband/father the entire power in the family, the Family Code stipulated that both spouses had the same rights in their marriage, including the exertion of parental authority on their children.

The reproductive life – we have all the reasons to consider the liberalization of abortion occurred in 1957 to be at the base of the changes in the reproductive life of a family. The abortion – as a voluntary birth control method – had been prohibited since 1640. Until 1947, the modern Romanian state had issued two Penal Codes (1865, 1936), both of them stipulating that the medical abortion was the only one legally allowed. When the communists revised Decree 482 they changed only the juridical aspects of abortion, which was considered a crime since then. This is why we consider the liberalization of 1957 to be an unprecedented act in the Romanian legislation, even if all that it did was to leggaly acknowledge a long lasting reality (we have in mind that the abortion had been used as the main birth control method for a long time).

The divorce – even in the periods when the family life was regulated by Church the divorce, called *separation,* was approved in few circumstances. The act of 1966 which stipulated the exceptional character of the divorce turned over the entire private life of individuals. If we consider that the Civil Code of 1865 stipulated that in some circumstances the mutual consent was enough for the spouses to separate, we have to see the communists legislation as a step backwards! The appartments crisis, the lack of money for the juridical procedure, the fear of being considered an outsider - all of these are reasons that have to be taken into consideration when it comes about divorce in the communist period.

As we already stated, in order to have a correct image, we should see the communist legislation in its temporal and social context. It is not enough to just analize the main laws, decrees and instructions issued between 1947 and 1989 in order to be able to reconstruct the family life over a span of 40 years! We may be surprised seeing the extent in which this legislation was only based on revisions of older laws and we have to admit that, talking about legal principles, they did not innovate much, especially regarding the coercive measures. Conversely, they did innovate by temporarily allowing unexpected rights and freedoms, and it is in this innovative legislation where the rupture with the former legislation regarding the family is to be found.

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From the Family to Social Network. Trust, Commitment, Participation

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Abstract: In this paper we are focusing on correlation between economic capital and social capital: in many circumstances, building of economic capital can determine the formation of a social network, which can in turn further develop the economic capital or on the contrary lead to its decrease. Family businesses cover a big proportion of the economic space, while they have also a great specificity. This specificity is largely due to the subtle game between family commitment and individual interests or cliques, domestic subgroups. The last part of the paper presents the results of a study on mono-parental families from Transylvania's urban and rural areas and also focuses on the forms of intergenerational exchange. Preliminary data on urban/rural mono-parental family comparative research suggests a sensible difference between the support received both in terms of the source of support as well as content of support. Using a multivariable and indicators analysis (poverty, level of education, external migration) we have interpreted the results through a variety of explicative models (such as the opportunity cost model). Empirical studies looking at the community level, formal and informal social capital, structured or circumstantial show that in community life, during the crises situation of the family in need, social capital potential is quickly transformed into a manifest and efficient solidarity. But this transformation is not enough for the mono-parental families in poverty situation. In this context, the existence of a structured form of social capital (and its permanent functioning) is crucial. Informal type of social capital is present in the extended family and kinship, while the formal type of social capital is present in the state and NGO's programs and policies, but not yet at the degree that would be needed.

Keywords: formal and informal social capital; structured and circumstantial social capital; social trust; kinship; familial solidarity; intergenerational exchange

1. Social capital and its macro functions: The network importance

Despite existing theoretical-methodological controversy regarding social capital, there is still one unanimously shared and expressed statement according to which, the social capital concept is not just complex, but also highly ubiquitous (omnipresent, flexible and versatile). This is supporting its great epistemological potential – the concept can be applied in different thematic fields, but also renders a degree of confusion and vagueness (see Kay and Johnston 2007). Going further we can formulate an expression such as „ a genotype with multiple phenotype applications" (Adam and Roncevic 2003). We strongly believe that looking beyond the multiple already existing definitions or attempting to develop new ones, it is important to highlight the fundaments attached to the content of social capital concept, its the characteristics and typology, as well as its possible applications in the areas of public policies and optimization of associations and networks activities.

Even if Coleman is not the first thinker to launch the social capital concept, and not the only contributor to the definition and promotion of issues related to it (other important authors mentioned along him are Bourdieu and Putnam), we will stress on the notes and characteristics of social capital proposed by the American sociologist, including here part of the ideas of Sapiro (2006) and building on this conceptual infrastructure with new, complementary observations.

Coleman (1988, 1990) views the social capital as functional and also facilitating, *which means that the potential for social networks and structures becomes effective in specific conditions in order to obtain individual and group goals.* It facilitates concrete actions, being a mobilising source for collective actions. At societal level, the facilitative function raises a crucial question of the social capital becoming a means (a tool) for mass political and economic actions, preventing the social tension, convulsion and conflicts.

Social Capital is lying deep encrusted in the relations structure of social actors, in social structures. It is neither an individual characteristic nor a trans-individual, societal-abstract characteristic. Social capital can be seen as a productive resource, only due to existence of mutual relationships in the interactions between the members of a group.

The social actor, as a creator, supporter and beneficiary of the social capital can be either an individual person or a corporative one. Therefore, we should look not just to individuals as carriers of social capital, but also towards organisations, institutions, and finallly towards the government itself, which has a fundamental role in stimulating and coordinating different entities and manifestations of social capital.

As it becomes visible from the above, the social capital *does not come forward as one entity*, but as an universe of entities. The role of the social capital is more visible in the economic and political fields, but we believe that a potential of social capital stock can be found in many, if not all areas of social life.

Social capital *is not a well shaped and constant presence*. What in some circumstances may come across as social capital, in other situations it may not have this character. In this case, Coleman points more towards the productivity of social capital. To illustrate, we can look towards the clubs, coffeeshops and associations, which became real sources of political capital.

Social capital is a *limited public good*. Due to the fact that social capital is not an individual trait but an outcome of the interactions between individuals and organisations, individuals can participate in social capital without expecting or having a benefit from it. Also, they may not participate, but still receive advantages from it. A "limited public good" also means that without intention or volition of those involved in different types of social capital, these can become extinct, with the birth or death of the social capital resulting from a multitude of individual or collective actions.

As in the case of other type of capitals, the social capital does not lead to productivity, throught its mere presence. In order to became active, the social capital needs to be mobilized and transacted. This is a fundamental theoretical issue. There is a significant diference between affirming that "the presence of the strong connections inside a group or an organization is the cause of specific action" or "applying an explicative model that views the respective conections as a resource which can be mobilized for a concrete action" .

Social capital *does not always have positive effects*. The theory of negative and sometimes perverse effects of social capital is well known in the literature. The exemples coming from the political sphere are more frequent: what constitutes a positive social (electoral) capital for one political party can be a „collective wrong" for other one. Sandu (2003) also stresses that sociabily and social capital are "good" or "bad" according to the groups and organisations to whom we refer to. In other words, we must always use the interegotation: to whom is it useful? The same problem is underlined by Westluand (2006), with the amendment that the variable (and contradictory) character of social capital is easy to define in the relationships between specific groups, associations or concrete institutions relations, it is still difficult to resolve on what may be considered „ good" or „ bad" at national level.

Without a doubt, besides Coleman, there are other authors who focused on the social capital concept. For example, while approaching the importance of reciprocity in Coleman's conception of social capital, we may also stress the distinction made by Putnam (2000) between the two types of reciprocity: a) *Specific:* I help someone because I expect he/she will help me, for example if I will not go to someone's funerary, it is more probable their family will not come to mine. In the Romanian territory, the reciprocity mechanism is deeply present and transparent in the case of wedding attendance, where the decision-making process to attend a particular event is based on the presence of their family to own family weddings events. b) *Generalized:* because I value human beings, I am attending all funerals I can, assuming that in the name of the same values, somebody will come to mine. Inside the academic world, the generalized reciprocity can be seen on the occasion of conferences, book launching and anniversary events.

Putnam, engaged in the debate on social capital in the USA, declares that the social capital has decreased, being the cause of a weak political participation, including the voting process. Compared with the past, we can note a sharp decrease in the interest of various citizens structures towards political issues and debates.

Still many authors support the view that citizens' solidarity, voluntary associations and social capital generally speaking have not degraded, but can be seen in different forms, with their productivity being visible in other fields, such as: women's, children's and animals' rights and as well as in the ecology movement. On the other hand, as stressed this time by Bourdieu (1993), we should also take into consideration the family social capital, the *peer groups, as well as the capital generated by human actions* regarding the living space and leisure.

A series of studies is dedicated to inequality in relationship to social capital. Lin (2001) views the social capital as a basic social equation in which the key factor is cooperation, but which depends on the mutual trust, on social structures of opportunity (organisations, associations and networks) and on interactions norms, from which the most relevant by far is reciprocity. The author concludes we should not forget though that there are many forms of cooperation functioning where the trust is unilateral, where there is a minimum level of trust or even where there is no trust. In this case the complementarity of interests, values and norms make the cooperation possible. The decisive conjunction is between the human (competence based) capital and the social capital. As Sandu (2003) observed, our analysis of organizations, associations and other forms of human cooperation would better focus on the *socio-human capital* (Sandu 2003: 69). Both cooperation as well as the organization and functioning of institutions with their social-human meet almost with necessity with inequalities. Lin (2001) makes the distinction between the „capital deficit" regarding the inequalities in the volume of social capital that can be accessed by different social groups and the „return deficit", referring to different quantities of utility returned by various groups.

Kay and Johnston (2007), in an attempt to conclude on the social capital concept, based on Coleman but also other recent authors, remark that the social capital involves networks with an inevitable norm of reciprocity, networks which provide their 'insiders' in opposition with 'outsiders' resources for attaining their own interests. We need to use two crucial dimensions of the social capital role and consequences: 1) *Distributive processes*, with two opposed facets (inclusion and exclusion) and 2) *Reproduction process*, due to the fact that social capital structures of access to resources refresh and develop in turn the content of social capital (Kay and Johnston 2007: 49).

Herreros (2004) considers, in the spirit of Coleman, that social capital understanding must start from the assumption that the social capital (viewed as a solidarity potential) is an outcome of other activities, which provide private goods, and that trust is a rational choice, the result of a decision to trust.

In other view-points (Adam and Roncevic 2003), social capital and economic development research can be summarized in four major perspectives[1]: community, networks, institutional and synergy.

The *community perspective* is based on the equivalence of social capital with local organisations such as clubs, associations, and civic groups. Followers of community perspective view the social capital inherently good, and the more social capital exists, the better, while its presence has always a positive effect on community. They ignore the disadvantages in the isolated or parochial networks or communities or those from periphery of society: ghettos, gangs, traffic and drugs networks where social capital is replaced by the so called perverse social capital, a serious trap that prevents progress. In this case, the costs may overpass the benefits generated by the community inclusion (for example, bright girls from India are withdrawn from the schools to comply with the expectations of their communities, or crime syndicate from Latin America and Russia can generate serious negative externalities for entire society). This perspective assumes that communities are homogenous entities, in which all members have benefits, but class inequalities, ethnical exclusion and sexual discrimination are produced and maintained by community pressure. Systematic studies from developing countries (Kenya, Rwanda, and Haiti) show that social solidarity and informal groups do not necessary lead to economic prosperity.

The *network perspective* seems to be more nuanced, viewing both the advantages/virtues of social capital as well as its disadvantages/weaknesses. This perspective stresses importance of vertical and horizontal associations, and the relations between organisational entities such as community groups and companies. It also recognizes that the strong intra-community relations are those

[1] For this section Ph D candidate Adela Fofiu did the references selection.

which give to family and community a common identity as well as a common goal (*bonding capital*), but that without inter-community relations across the religion, class, ethnicity, sex and socio-economic status divides, the horizontal connections can become the foundation for following self-interests (*bridging capital*). So, social capital is as a double face coin (or a sword with a double blade): it can ensure valuable services for community members, but at the same time there are costs because the same connections can determine negative economic consequences. Secondly, the sources (roots) of social capital must be distinguished from its consequences. There is the possibility that the results might be against the interests of a different group, to be suboptimal or to lead to significant future costs. A logical conclusion is that both strong intra-community connection as well as extra-community networks need to be in place in order to avoid the tautology on efficacies of social capital. This viewpoint argues that while community welfare changes in time, so will the optimal calculation of costs and benefits associated with various combinations strengthening and connection. Granovetter (1985) affirms that economic development takes place through a mechanism, which allows the individuals to enjoy first the membership in community, a fact that contributes to their development of skills and provides resources in order to participate in networks that transcend community. This can be proved using visual graphs and applied in poverty reduction process (India, Africa). Far away from ignoring the vitality of traditional groups from poor rural communities (modernization approach) or to romanticize (community approach), the network approach recognizes that these groups can encourage or block the economic development.

The challenge for this theory is to identify the conditions under which multiple positive aspects (like commitment in poor community) of social capital can be valuable and in which their integrity can be maintained, helping in the same time the poor to get access to formal institutions and to a more diverse strengthening social capital also. The theory's strength is the availability of the detailed discussion on empirical proofs pro and contra their accuracy. As a week point, we can observe that the „public good" nature of social groups is minimized, while followers of this perspective are sceptical about the possibilities of measuring social capital on a broader scale, at the level of societies and nations.

The third (*institutional) perspective* views the vitality of community and its social networks as the result of the political, legal and institutional environment. The social capital is no longer seen as an independent variable, as the previous perspectives did, but as dependent variable. The capacity of the social groups to take action towards their common interests depends on the quality of formal institutions from the areas where they reside (North 1990), while the efficiency of firms and states are directly correlated with their internal coherence, credibility and competence. The researches done under this perspective follow two tracks with complementary outcomes: first track presents case-studies based on comparative history which conclude that it is wrong to expect firms and community progressing where the government withdraws from action; rather on the contrary, society progresses at the same pace with the government encouragement for this. The second track is based on quantitative studies on the effects of the government actions and social divisions on economic performance: corruption, bureaucratic delays, civil rights restrains, inequalities, ethnic tensions and disrespect on property rights: all are majors issues blocking the prosperity. The strength of this perspective lays in its use for macroeconomic policies, while its weakness relates to its lack of microeconomic dimension.

The synergic perspective was created as an answer to the discordances already presented and tries to integrate the institutional and networks perspectives. The most influential research was published in a special issue of the *World Development* (1996) magazine and examined cases from Brazil, India, Mexico, Korea and Russia in order to find the conditions which ensure the synergy of development: dynamic professional alliances, networks between state bureaucracy and various actors of civil society. Three major conclusions of these studies are:

a) Neither state nor societies are inherent good or bad: governments, corporations and civic groups are impact variable for attaining the collective objectives.
b) States, firms and communities do not posses by themselves the resources for strategic development; complementarities and partnerships in and between this sectors are most needed, and conditions under which synergy occurs is a central task for research and practice also.
c) The role of the state in facilitating positive results is both important and challenging, since state is the main provider of public goods, an arbiter for the rule of law, but also the most capable actors for facilitating sustainable alliances beyond the borders of class, ethnicity, race, sex, religion and politics. The firms and communities also have an important role in creating the conditions that produce, recognize and reward good governance.

The literature in this field argues that synergy between the government and its citizens is based on complementarities (mutual support between public and private sectors) and substance (nature and extension of connections between citizens and public officers). This view functions only where the actions of public officials are simultaneously joined with organizational environments based on competence, coherence, credibility and performance. Woolcock (1999, *apud* Adam and Roncevic 2003) shows that part of the development results are coming from different type and mix of community capacity and state functioning. In the societies or communities with a good governance and a high level of social capital separation, a complementarity coexists between state and society, social order and economic prosperity. However, when the social capital resides in primary social groups disconnected from each other, the powerful groups can dominate the state. When the representatives of the state, private sector, and civil society establish common forums to fulfil common goals, progress takes place and the social capital has the role of a mediator variable.

The synergic perspective suggests three major tasks for theoreticians, practitioners and policy-makers: to identify the nature and extension of the community social relations and of formal institutions, to develop institutional strategies based on these social relations, particularly with regards to the extension of strengthening and connection social capital, and to find how positive social capital manifestations (cooperation, trust, institutional efficiency) can produce isolation, sectarianism and corruption. In other words, to transform the situation in which the social capital substitutes the weak, hostile and indifferent formal state institutions, into institutions where both dimensions are complementary present and functioning.

Looking beyond epistemological labelling of various perspectives on social capital and its functions, we consider the importance of specific analysis of different cultures, regions and countries, since relationships between different forms and types of social capital vary significantly. After the pertinent analysis of Bădescu and Porumb (2006), according with different authors opinions, in post-communist societies, the associations are different from those in the democratic traditions societies, not just in quantity, but also in terms of quality. Ash (2000), for example, considers that a question about non-governmental organizations from Eastern Europe remains open: are these ”as the seeds on a nice looking grass of civil society or are they like the so called astral-grass, an artificial grass which covers the soil, preventing the real grass to grow” (Ash 2000: 400). Other analysts believe that in the Balkan area as well as in other former communist countries, the associations are understood in a different way, with determinants and effects that are distinctive from those in the West-democratic countries. The differences are viewed as coming from the fact that many associations in Eastern Europe where constituted and continue to function with the help of international organisations, which embraced the idea that the development of civil society is critical for democracy and a successful transition. This type of associations tend to have weak connections with local communities, and the motivation of inhabitants to participate and commit to these organizations' activities is far different from the groups (grassroots) with ”natural roots”. Also they believe that members of these associations became a local elite, motivated by high salaries, possibility of helping their friends and acquaintances to get jobs, access to the members of the political class and less from a real social commitment and motivation (Sandu 1999, Mandel 2002). Having roots in communist experience, these states cover a continuum in the development of autonomous organizations specific to each country; if we take into consideration the size of international support given to post-communist associations, Romania and Moldova represent the country category with a wide ”artificial” civil society, in comparison with other communist countries. Low performance of state institutions in new democracy countries tends to offer more reason and more urgent needs for their citizens to act in protection to the personal interest and less as a contribution to common good (Bădescu 2003, Bădescu, Sum, Uslaner 2004, apud Bădescu and Porumb 2006). A direct consequence will be that in these societies, the difference between active and non-active individuals in terms of general attitudes and norms, such as trust, tolerance and solidarity, is lower than in the more advanced democracies.

As a conclusive remark, Bădescu and Porumb (2006) argue that the activists from the associations characterised by social trust, solidarity, tolerance, and political information are a real resource for their democratic community. The hypothesis of systematic differences between three categories of European nations was tested, including twelve developed democracies, two new democracies (Spain and Portugal) and seven former communist countries. There are no clear differences between these three groups (old, new or communist states), with the exception of important cases: Moldova and Romania, analysed based on composite indicators, are two states with less developed civic societies during communist regimes. Mainly due to this fact, they are also countries where post-communist associations have received the most significant support from international donor organizations. As a consequence, the social trust measured in these countries shows that the activists and non-activists are not different (Bădescu and Porumb: 16).

2. Social capital, trust and participation. Axiological determinism

The social capital concept is strongly associated with other concepts, up to becoming interchangeable with some, such as: *sociability, cohesion, solidarity*. But also concepts such *rationality, collective action, social networks, social efficiency* are strongly associated with the key concept of social capital. Above all, one of the most highlighted is the one of *trust*.

A first issue and a fundamental one concern the root of trust: where is trust coming from, what are its explicative factors? As it happens with other characteristics too (egoism-altruism for example), most likely as a biologic fact, the human being is "programmed" to trust the other and in the same time, to be prudent and suspicious. It is rational to assume that such natural-biological inclinations exist (Iluţ 1994). But as the genetic specialists recognize even when we talk about physiology (including in diseases), the phenotype – concrete individual profile is a results of interactions between the born traits and the environment. This is even clearer in the case of complex social behaviours. Trust is a matter of interests, social relations and structures, socio-cultural environment in which the individual lives and works. This is why the genesis and nature of trust is usually treated under two main paradigms:

1) Trust can be obtained through *socialization* and becomes a *moral norm*. Uslaner (2002) asserts that human beings develop an axiological-moral orientation in having trust in the others. For Uslaner, the inclination to be convinced that you can invest trust in others people is quasi-independent from specific trust experienced with real persons. According with this type of moral trust, a person A has trust in people not because it has information about them, but simply because the respective person considers that trust is a moral, collective good, and bases its inclination on the assumption that the others share the idea that trust means a possibility to cooperate, and thought this, to have control upon important things in their life. Of course, Uslaner admit that not all people share this principle, but a great majority do.

As Rothstein (2005: 56-57) observes, the conception about social trust as an abstract moral principle, as general view about world it is deficient for the simple fact that human being have experiences and they learn from them. A direct learning happens from example when people notice they are discriminated based on their sexual orientation, an indirect learning when they learn by observing what happens to others, and to these two forms we can also add another one, the complex-cognitive learning (Iluţ 2000): it is not necessary to live on your own the experience of certain interactions and neither to observe them in others, but through reading and stories of consequences that others share, through reasoning and evaluation, you make a judgement that certain actions are desirable, while others have high risks and disadvantages. We can subscribe to this rational social judgement process the examples given by Rothstein referring to Swedish citizens' high level of trust in correct behaviour of the police force in their country, but which does not extend to the police force in geographical areas (particularly in underdeveloped countries).

2) The second important paradigm, with extension to general human behaviour, but also applied to the issue of trust is the utility-based perspective, of homo economicus. Hardin (1999) suggest that trust concept must be understood as a function of instrumental utility. His main assumption is that a person A does

not generally trust in a person B, but only trusts her in relationship to something specific. I do not trust my dentist as a person with a sum of her beliefs, attitudes and behaviours, but in her specialist competence: trust is based on the fact that I know the dentist respectively has a strong interest to avoid disappointing me, since otherwise, not only will he/she lose me as a client, but through my public comments, may lose other present or potential clients. Hardin calls this mechanism the *encapsulated trust*, denominating that person A knows that person B actions are "encapsulated" inside a simulative structure in which her interest is to behave in a trustworthy manner. Hardin makes a distinction between "trust" and "*trustworthiness"*. In English language the substantive *trustworthiness* represent more than being *trustworthy*. For Romanian language, it is pretty difficult to find a substantive for *trustworthiness*, representing the quality, attribute, general human propriety for generating trust. In its essence "*trustworthy*" can express almost the same thing. Trust cannot be a moral virtue, because it is absurd and dangerous to trust a person who is not *trustworthy*. To be *trustworthy* it is a moral quality, no doubt about it. In fact Hardin suggests that few people conduct themselves in trust matters, upon moral norms. The majority of people take in consideration their own interests and strive to be as rational as they can. This is why the American sociologist believes that there is no point to discuss the general trust, as one cannot – and neither is recommended – give trust to people whom one does not know or who do not satisfy their own specific interests. The same principle can be useful for political-state institutions.

The following critical remarks can be made in relationship to the utility and rationale choice paradigm (Rothstein 2005):

a) The assumption that trust means the mutual interests satisfaction, with their "encapsulated" quality as a key concept, does not explain the multiple-interactions and social relations; instead this refers more to minor aspects of individual behaviour, where at one moment, if person B considers that they can gain more by betraying the trust of person A, he/she will do it. In other words, the mutual trust that lays under the sign of interests, settled in stimulating structures is productive, but breaking the trust can sometimes produce even more gains to one of the participants;

b) Numerous empirical studies show that investing trust and practicing it is not based on calculation in terms of costs and tangible gains, or on utility and instrumental rationality;

c) It is hard to know and to explain how society is functioning if the citizens do not have trust - even if it is not complete and unconditioned - in institutions such as justice, universities and even in political parties. The fact that people are not universally trustful in institutions and authorities is also confirmed by the variety of trust degree from a country to another.

Next, using the recent literature in the field as support and our observations and reflections (based on empiric research data), we will bring forward our views that we believe clarify the issue of debate:

a) Next to the well known distinction introduced by Putnam (2000) between *bridging social capital (connecting social capital)*, which indicates the relations between distinct social unites, and *bonding social capital (intra-group social capital),* it probably is an heuristic gain to label the citizens participation to public organizational life and trust in the political-administrative institutions as a *formal capital,* and what is connected with solidarity and interpersonal trust (friendship, family relations etc) and community, as *informal capital*. The author who proposes such distinction is Konoridos (2005), who also states that concordance but also dissonance may exist between the formal and informal capital. Even more, in numerous cases, a compensation law seems to be in place: in a weak formal social capital situation, a strong informal social capital is developed. It must also be mentioned that conceptual duality between formal-informal capital have a correspondent (Luhman 1998, apud Weber and Carter 2003) in the distinction between *confidence* (confidence in the system, institutions and their representatives) and trust (trust in inter-personal, *face to face* relations).

b) There is another important distinction (Rothstein 2005) between the *quantitative* aspect of social capital (operationalized in the number of relations) and *qualitative* one (intensity of trust in those relations). This distinction is worth noting, with the observation that the intensity of trust can also be measured. Based on this distinction, Rothstein states that at individual level, the social capital is ”the sum of social relations, multiplied with the quality of trust in these relations” (2005: 66). The author recognizes that it is not an easy task to measure or evaluate the real volume of social capital, including through the combination of the two sides: whose social capital is bigger when we compare two individuals, in the conditions in which one person has five relations where she trusts completely and the second has fifty connection, but in which she only trusts partially? Rothstein considers that the definition mentioned earlier can be applied in the same time to the aggregate level as well as to the corporative actors: the quantity of social capital in society or organizations is determined by the extension of social relations that individuals (or organizations) have on average and how much they consider that can trust these relationships. Thus, a society where more people and organizations have trust-based relationship has a higher stock of social capital. Regarding the measurement of trust, the following idea is decisive: evaluating the level of trust using standardized tools (questionnaires and scales), we very often can note an increasing level of trust and solidarity from micro to macro-social (at least toward some institutions), but this is just *declarative*, which means that the answers are subject to systematic errors in one direction, with *social desirability* as a main source of such errors. For this reason, when we discuss about "generalized trust", it is necessary to pay attention to the distorted methodological effects. Generalized trust (extended) is a concept which refers to a vague reality and anyhow, it was proved that is strong associated with optimism, as personality trait. As a long list of authors mentioned, it is better to record *real behaviours* and not just general answers or declared behaviours.

c) If we refer to the real facts, it could be more probable for the strongest solidarity and trust to lie at micro level (kinship and friendship) and weaker trust at the mezzo level (community), as family interests (from first degree relations to those of kinship and clan) can fragment and even create tensions in the community (disputes about land, forests financial funds and other collective goods). In relation with macro level trust, it may be more accentuated that at mezzo level, but as we already presented, it is more diffuse and declarative. This does not mean that trust cannot take more tangible forms vis-à-vis specific institutions, such as: Parliament, Government, political parties, Church, Army etc. It will be useful to mention two aspects regarding the respective trust:

1. When we evaluate the trust and the value of these institutions in the public perception, we must take into account that these depend very much on how much and in what way these institutions affect the interest of the ordinary citizen. It is clear that Parliament, Government, political parties will gain a low score, because they are held responsible for an unsatisfactory situation regarding the quality of life perceived by the majority of the population (at least in economically underdeveloped countries, such as Romania). On the other hand, the Army and especially the Church, even if they do not have a beneficial value for the individual and social welfare, they are at least neutral. Recurrently, the public opinion barometers (POB) conducted in Romania show that the Church and the Army are ranked in the top, while the Parliament, the Government and the Presidency are ranked at the bottom in a scale of trust. For example, the POB from October 2004 splits the trust in Parliament on following categories: lack off 16%; very little 15.9%; little 44.5%; much 16.3%; very much 2.2,%. Trust in Government is not so accentuated, but still at low level: lack off 13.5%; very little 12.7%; little 42.6%; much 23.6%; very much 3.4%. Trust in Presidency shows this range: lack off 8.3%; very little 9.9%; little 36.4%; much 33.6%; very much 7.6% (remaining figures till 100% represents non-response). While it may not be relevant to

continue to present further figures, it is important to say that for the Army and the Church the figures configuration is almost in opposition.

d) The biggest drama of ordinary citizen in relationship with the social system and its institutions is that generally, the only control that he/she has is manifested through elections and referendum. It is true that public opinion and collective behaviour (manifestations, strikes and mass media activities) can influence the political sphere in-between elections, but the limits and conditions for this influence are quite narrow (see Chelcea 2002, Bădescu 2003, Coman 2004, Iluț 2004).

e) Social capital and trust are built in time, *reciprocity* being a key element needed in the process of crystallization and consolidation of these. The informal social capital offers a broader visibility in this respect. While forgiveness often intervenes, gaining the trust requires a long time frame, while losing occurs very rapidly. (Rothstein 2005). Two comments can be made here:

1. While usually, building of trust requires a long period of time, there are still situations in which time constraints appear, and individuals must make decisions quickly whether they do trust one person or not. The emotional factor is fully in place here. For example, lending an amount of money to someone close to you, but about whom you do not have relevant information on how well they keep their word. As field literature underlines, trust is to a great extent also a matter or *risk*. You can have surprises even from those ”checked” in advance. This also encompasses the relations of love and marriage. But also in organizations, institutions and associations, certain individuals, often in leadership positions, may fail to fulfil the expectations and trust that other members have invested in them.
2. While in the debate field of social capital and trust, reciprocity norm is seen as an exchange (see Elster, apud Konoridos 2005, Hardin 1999), in social psychology, where this norm is approached theoretically, it has a slightly different nuance: the exchange assumes reciprocity, but as an inter-human norm, it also has a moral character, which means I will feel obligated when needed to do something positive for somebody who helped me in the past, even if I do not expect anything else in the future from this particular person (see in extension Iluț 2000). It is about what we many times call gratitude, and which, in societies were general social capital is developed functions very well. Actually, this component would be better included in what some authors call the *moral dimension of social capital*, together with solidarity based on mutual interests. In the research process it is difficult to operate a valid distinction between the two components; still any efforts in this direction have also a strong relevance for social policies.

f) There is a *positive correlation* between moral obligations and participation to public life, measured by the density of social network (their quantity and quality), but as many specialists note, it is difficult to establish which is the independent and which is the dependent variable, to distinguish between the cause and the effect. Rationally, in time, we can consider a *causal circularity* (term which is more explicative that frequent used term *feedback*). This mechanism is worth exploring also for the *positive association between economic growth, social capital stock and generalised trust* (see also Konoridos 2005, Rothstein 2005, Weber and Carter 2003). Even if deep plural-methods type investigations carried by Putnam (1993) in Italy, taking advantage on a natural quasi-experiment of regional political-administrative decentralization, suggest that social capital (trust) has the determining influence on the successful implementation of reform (and economic development), other authors are reserved about the validity of this unidirectional causality. Nevertheless, it is important to underline that the formation of an operational social capital builds in time and depends on many pre-existing conditions, such as traditional forms of community organization, access to information and so on.

g) The social capital and trust, *as much as they have a great stability,* must be seen also as socio-psychological entities *with a "variable geometry",* shaping different contours diachronically and according to the situations. This is why, in our opinion, together with the above mentioned distinctions (bridging/bonding capital, formal/informal, quantitative/qualitative and other types) it is important to make also the distinction between *the structural social capital* (stable) and *the situational social capital* (that depends on the circumstances). More precisely, when we look at the notion of capital as something that exists, we actually look more towards structural social solidarity (cooperation) and towards the situational solidarity. This means that there is always a potential of solidarity and cooperation, which can be permanently active (manifest), thus stable (at the formal level this is quasi-necessary) or it can manifest only in particular circumstances. For example, children or ethnic group rights movements (including political parties), feminist movements have as a foundation a specific solidarity and a permanent concern for maintaining it. On the other hand, one community may mobilize and prove an intense level of solidarity and cooperation only in case of collective goods provided (such as street repairing, drinking water pipeline network or natural gas, building a new edifice or opposing to be built). The social capital does not only have a situational character, but more than that, we can even say is a *contradictory* one: what in a certain context means solidarity and mutual trust in common action, in others it may reflect in tension or violence, even for the same social actors. To illustrate, we can use the case of street neighbours, especially in rural areas, where there is a strong cohesion when it comes to common interests (street asphalt, water pipeline introducing, or sewerage etc), but when it comes to property rights or misunderstandings, ”territory” violation by the animals or other such issues, tensions may take different range from small quarrels, to verbal or physical aggression, or starting up a court suit. Such cases are frequent in Romania too, with the well known solidarity inside Roma communities, when the law enforcement institutions are searching infractions, even if in the same communities misunderstandings, quarrels and aggressions may regularly appear. If we go further to the domestic environment, which we all know that beyond pragmatic rationale of costs and benefits is a space of affective solidarity, we can also view a high rate of violence and violent crime. Consequently, we should not forget that solidarity and social capital are not just productive, but they also have a negative, dark side in their functioning, an observation that is common between specialists in the field: on the one hand organisations, associations, close neighbours or families can somehow limit the personal freedom and intimacy, but, even more importantly, there is solidarity in social evil, for example in drugs and person trafficking networks, terrorist organizations, gangs, local or international mafia.

h) On the other hand, as we suggested*, the most intense inter-human social capital is at the level of kinship* (a contemporary extended family*)*[2], and in this respect our empirical studies on intergenerational exchanges at family level (see also Tîrhaş 2008) brings certain nuances or even substantially changes an idea that is frequently presented in mass-media and political rhetoric discourse: a very difficult material-financial situation of the old people. It is true that in themselves, the incomes of old people from villages as well as of city pensioners are mostly very small. This are compensated through aid (material but also in services) that comes from children, grandchildren and other relatives. This intergenerational exchange means more than unidirectional assistance (material or other kind) from children towards their old parents. The old parents continue to help their children particularly through their care for grandchildren or even replacing parents during shorter or longer periods of time. A case frequently presented on TV channels is the one of “poor” children those parents are working abroad and who are staying with their grandparents (or other relative) in villages. No doubt, this situation is not the most happy from both the emotional and educational perspective. But the explanation based on isolate cases, that this situation leads to suicide is totally incorrect and even immoral. It would be more helpful to present statistics with cases of suicide of children with parents working

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[2] It is symptomatic, according to Coleman (apud Herreros 2004: 5), social capital term was first time utilized by Loury in 1977, referring to existing resources in family relations and dynamics for cognitive development of children.

abroad, and those living with their own normal family in country. If we can control other variables (disharmonic families, mono-parental, poverty, husband or wife in prison for long judicial sentence) the ”explanation” about parents working abroad becomes even less relevant. It is not the place here to analyse suicide causes, but throwing with superficiality, hypocrisy or lack of awareness such appreciations, just for the sake of being “interesting” for audience, may be seen as an irresponsible behaviour. The massive migration from former socialist countries to developed countries has many negative consequences for the remittent country: brain drain and high qualified labour force, image damages by some individuals' actions, there are undesirable effects, some subtle and difficult to perceive on normative-emotional context of a family (especially for children) and sometimes also for communities. It is easy to understand that there are also *significant advantages* (see Ciobanu 2007): the influx of cash coming from workers abroad to our country (for the family benefit first, of course), but also mostly in the case of pendulum migration, an influx of ”civilization” too (modern habits and mentalities which undermine contra-productive traditions for contemporary society); children staying at home have benefits from this situation, including clothing, food, home environment, computer and other important objects, tuition fees for access to a better education and better schools and opportunities to learn or work abroad. It is hard to establish the balance between advantages and disadvantages in the case of children whose parents are working abroad who remain at home in the absence of one or even both parents. But it is unfair to insist just on negative consequences. It is not hard to apply to this case a cost of opportunity theory, trying to imagine what would happen if the parents would not have had the opportunity to work abroad and they would have stayed at home.

i) *The public image about elderly having a distressful situation* can be explained also by *the effect* of social cognition named *priming*, a phenomenon through which bombed with one specific type of information, certain subjects may *create* a predisposition in their minds, a background for interpreting new information that permits a colouring by the background information, with evaluation based on the most recent, consensual information. Mass media, especially television which in search of sensational, provide an abundance of episodes that lead to the creation of such image. We do not intend with these comments to diminish the social efforts for quality of elderly life. But we think that the identification of the real situation of elderly and generally of those evaluated as ”poor” looking beyond formal indicators (salary, official income, unemployment, number of children) would seriously help the social policies. This means that the programs and policies should be differentiated according to the real situation and not just to the formal one. It is very clear that legislation, policies and programs cannot reach to the individual cases and not to detailed situations. A broader solution is the administrative *decentralization* from the national level (government, state macro-institutions, etc.) to the level of regions and communities, as required by EU and recommended by theoreticians in their papers (see also Leonardi 2005). In such a case, the concrete implementation of different programs and policies would be more efficient and flexible, while the funds and benefits from EU, state or community level could be distributed with more equity, because local communities know better local situations and can intervene quicker with greater utility. However, where there is not a civic culture and a social capital based on equity, reciprocity and moral obligation, the decentralization process also has a number of dangerous situations, when the local authorities, using solidarity principle but for their relatives and friends or for other interests, treat flagrantly unfairly other citizens. What can be done? Weighting decentralization advantages with disadvantages, it is clear that the advantages will be greater. In order to decrease disadvantages, especially the abuses and inequities, a monitoring from trans-European or trans-regional organisations may be helpful as well as, particularly in post-socialist countries, a cultivation of citizens' civic behaviour, training them to be able to advocate for gaining or regaining their rights. This transformation does not have a real chance if it stays at the level of enlighten discourse, but there is a need for real actions, including a good information system for citizens. Having as a support complete and accurate knowledge and data, it will be possible to reach what the field literature calls the "deliberative democracy", which includes listening and having empathy for opinions and interests that are different from our own. A precondition for this is that we also trust the counterpart to do the same. The deliberative democracy model means that we do not fix ourselves in preconceived ideas, but that we can reach a majority for cooperation dialogue, negotiation and constructive compromise in the decision-making process. In this way, we can ensure a greater sustainability of rules for the functioning of the organizations, associations and for the use of common goods (Rothstein 2005: 50-51).

j) Discussing about social capital, trust, participation, cohesion, we also addressed, in an explicit or implicit form, the issue of values and of their causal role in relationship to effective behaviours. In this case too, we must pay attention to complex issues linked with measurement of values and attitudes and to the probabilistic type of rapport between axiological structures and effective behaviours (see in extension Iluţ 2009).

3. Place and role of social capital in the contemporary parental system in Romania

As we have presented in previous sections, the social capital of extended family in Romania as well as in the South-East Europe and in post-socialist countries in general, has a wide-spread variety of types and forms of manifestation: family associations as a business type, networks of relatives or different clans with socio-economic activities more or less legal: "nepotism" or other similar practices based on kinship, as a dysfunctional social capital for community and society. Systematic studies show the *diverse and ingenious strategies* that family or individuals adopt not just for survival but to become a social success (see Strong, DeVault and Sayad 1998: 532-533). The fact that mono-parental family, for example, is perceived or constitute de facto in many cases a transitional phenomenon, can be viewed as a survival strategy per se, with the amendment that actually the poorest families, where mothers are from the most marginalised social segments actually have the minim chance for "visualising" the end of the mono-parental period.

Our studies (Iluț et al. 2009), focusing on the situation of mono-parental families from some urban and rural localities from Transylvania, show that in many cases the parent is not alone in rising their children. We discovered the following main mechanisms which are involved in assisting the mono-parental families: *help from the parents, help from brothers/sisters, help from colleagues, help from neighbours, help from friends, help from the Church, and help from the state*. The most frequent aid comes from own relatives, from the relative of the deceased person, and in rare cases from the divorced parent. It is also relevant to note that 43% from single parents say that they raise the children without any help. On the other hand, the most consistent help is received from the parents of the single parent, with 39% of mono-parental families in this situation. Next, 16% of the families are helped by the brothers and sisters of the single parent, 22% receive help from other relatives than the first degree relatives, 10% receive help from their neighbours, 13% receive help from friends, while the help received from colleagues and state has a coverage of 2% for each.

As the literature in this field illustrates, the same problems of material situation or generally of social status is not equally acute for single mothers who are in this state by their "own choice". The women who are reaching their maturity but have not found a suitable husband and want to have a child or simply they want to have a child with a particular man, but they do not want to make a marriage commitment usually have the discernment to evaluate the costs for raising a child in quality conditions, so they are not confronting, with some exception, with poverty.

The social capital crosses and determines the intergenerational intra-familial relations (and community relations), contributing actively to shaping possible life-models (translated in effective behaviours) of Romanian contemporary, according socio-demographic categories.

The better known studies focusing on the intergenerational exchange in the family as an informal form of social capital (Behrman et al. 1995, Hagestad 1995) were conducted in Western Countries. These studies looked at models for particular support and exchange forms between relatives (money, caring for children, moral-affective support), neglecting the relations between different variables involved in the exchange process inside familial groups, which was also a source for the criticism received by the study (Clogg et al. 1993, apud Behrman et al. 1995), mostly related to the composite approach.

An empirical investigation (Tîrhaş 2008) has set for itself the task to check the results of the studies related to this issue carried out in USA (Brisson and Usher 2007), which show that for poor categories, the intergenerational exchange in family is oriented more towards the easier/functional alternative, in the sphere of services, neglecting the material and symbolic exchange, and particularly the financial exchange (which remains a specific characteristic of the middle-upper class). This assumption may receive a further argument when we look to the fact that in Romania poverty is not affecting only the exchange between individuals, due to their small income, but it is also a result of macro social coordination: low rate of public spending for social protection. According with this research genre, besides a simple distribution analysis, a latent class analysis was used, as a specific method for ideal types, which are by nature categorical. Similarities and differences between the latent class model and the factorial analysis is given by McCutcheon (1987: 58-75, apud Tîrhaş 2008). Questionnaires have been applied for a number of 180 subjects from Transylvania (87 from urban and 93 rural areas): parents (named grandparents) and their adult children (named parents). The main forms of exchange (support) were split in four major categories (including subcategories): *money* - offer/receive; *advice/counselling* - offer/receive; *care* - offer/receive and *services* - offer/receive. The outcomes may be presented in a synthetic form such as:

a) 54% of the parents are in *first latent class*, which is associated with a low probability of receiving or offering support in any of the four categories of exchange. From the range of these subjects, in the low exchange category, 61% are not involved at all in any of the four types of exchange, and out of those who do have some form of exchange, 84% practice sporadically services and goods exchange, 9% offer or receive money, 5% care and just 2% counselling.

b) *The second latent class*, which is represented by 32% from the subjects, is associated with a relatively high probability for the *parents to offer support* (especially advice) *to grandparents*, *but there is also a low probability to receive support from the old generation*. 21% from the subjects receive different type of *counselling from their parents (grandparents),* 14% food and other goods, then following in order, money (9%), care (7%) and services (2%), while 20% of them offer services (mainly in household and agriculture), 17% give advice and offer emotional support to grandparents (counselling), 13% money, and only 10% offer care to grandparents. This category is opposed to the fourth category, in which parents received more than they offer to grandparents.

c) *A third latent class includes* 9% from the parents investigated. These are strongly involved in both offering as well as in receiving in a number of dimensions. This category is the greatest donor and the greatest beneficiary for almost all dimensions (with the one exception of *counselling*), compared with any other latent class and it is more probable to receive support compared with all other categories placed together in a beneficiary class. The service sphere also dominates here with 47%, but money and material goods exchange is also significant (31%). 26% from them offer care to grandparents and 24% advice.

d) *The fourth and the weakest in terms of representation latent class* (5%) is the one of the parents who receive more that offer to grandparents. From these, 6 persons receive especially material goods, money and services, 2 receive mostly *counselling and services,* and one care and money. They offer in exchange to grandparents firstly *counselling* (moral-affective support), but also services and goods.

Taking into account the socio-demographic variables (income, education, residence, age group) the following trends can be presented: a) those with a good material situation – from either villages or cities – practice most frequently the financial-material exchange (apartment for children, long term value goods, money), followed by service and assistance exchange. The symbolic exchange (phone calls, letters, gifts) is on the last place for this group, but still in greater numbers compared to other categories based on material criteria; b) the poorest – with small pensions, unemployed, families with a great number of children manifest an exchange structure anaemia in relation to all types of exchanges, even if the first in the hierarchy is the exchange of services (care for grandchildren by the grandparents, help in agriculture works, and periodically and sporadic help for parents in agriculture activities and household). The forms of exchange in the financial sphere, of goods or symbolic (phone calls, letters, gifts) are extremely reduced; c) those living in rural peripheries have a very low mutual exchange, judging from the perspective of all types of exchange. Even so, here services dominate (help in agriculture activities); d) adult daughters offer more assistance – advice, housekeeping support to old parents, while sons provide more help in household and material support; e) there are differences according to the grandparents age - and their cohort - in the content and hierarchy of intergenerational exchange. Getting older modifies both needs and lifestyle, therefore the exchange structure also changes. Still, the exchange remains active, even if it may be different compared with the younger age group. The difference between the parents' efforts for supporting grandparents and those of grandparents for supporting parents becomes higher only after 75 years old.

Many of the rational interpretations of the intergenerational exchange phenomenon share the assumption that parents invest time, energy, and money in carrying, rising and education of children until they will become adults, behaviour which will receive its pay back, through the adult children returning the duty of support for their old and dependent parents. This paying back or *reciprocity assumption* (Finch 1989) is explicit in many of the justification models (reciprocity, solidarity) and implicit in others (*emotional attachment*). For example, during the life time, the adults' attachment for their parents is higher and stronger when the needs of the children have been optimally fulfilled by them. The adult child who has a stronger emotional attachment for a parent who took care of him/her is more "predisposed" to allocate resources to their parents in old age, compared with the situation of lower attachment. The reciprocity assumption is only missing in the normative family duty models, of altruism and moral duty. All of these model types should be also analysed from the perspective of the attitudinal ambivalence explanation. Research data suggest that altruist models or tradition based models (moral duty, intergenerational solidarity function, family obligation norm) are less frequent than "functional" models (reciprocity norm, contextual utilitarianism and ambivalence).

As a general conclusion, looking at the community level and exploring the formal and informal social capital, as well as the structured and circumstance based social capital*, the empirical studies show that in life of the community, during crises or difficult times* when the family is in need of specific support, the social capital potential may rapidly convert into a manifest and efficient form of solidarity. However, in the case of mono-parental family associated with chronic poverty, this type of manifestation is not sufficient. The existence of structured social capital forms (functioning permanently) is crucial. As an informal variant, it exists in the form of the extended family and kinship, and as formal statute, in the state and NGO's programs and policies. A better collaboration (through institutionalized methods) between different forms of formal and informal social capital, both horizontally and vertically, would be a substantial benefit in general, for the community and society, and also for the families.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Lucian Nastasă-Kovacs. (2010). *Intimitatea amfiteatrelor. Ipostaze din viața privată a universitarilor "literari" [The Privacy of Amphiteaters. Moments of private life of "literary" intelectuals. 1864-1948].* Cluj-Napoca: Limes, 526 pp, ISBN: 978-973-726-469-5

Historian Lucian Nastasă-Kovacs has brought for some time in the forefront of his books the public and private lives of those who across time had been a model for young people: the university teachers. The present book takes us to the complex and dynamic world of the historians and philologists who activated between 1864-1948 in the structures of the University of Cluj but also in other university cities from all over the country.

As we said before, the subject of the book continues the previous concerns of the author from which we mention: *The intellectuals and the social promotion in Romania, 19th-20th centuries*, which has as a subject the social promotion of the Romanian intellectuals through "favorable marriages", graduating prestigious institutions and then practicing some "noble professions". In the same register is written the book *Roads to the savant world. Young people from the Romanian territories studying abroad, 1864-1944*, in which it is presented the intellectual formation of young Romanian people, starting with the studies supported by their parents who had an essential role in their future formation and also their completion of studies on German, French or Hungarian soil.

In ten chapters the author succeeds to convince us that the scouring of linear meters of archive, bibliographies, memoires and other sources was extremely useful for him in his attempt to describe the real lives, with their good and bad aspects, of those who reached the summit of the university society. Lucian Nastasă takes us in a exciting journey through the lives of the university professors starting with the dreams, thoughts, feminine ideal, couple life, or as a bachelor, continuing with the professional and material situation and ending with death. What the author does is to bring to the front the biographies of some men of letters (models worth to be followed in their profession and in everyday life as well) who had let through their personality and works an absolute treasure for their followers.

The lives of the university professors are revealed to us through the examples of the author when he refers to different events. The personal mail was one of his main sources; with the help of quotes we succeed to better understand them when they had to deal with difficult moments in life. Marriage and couple life were intimate subjects and their aspects were revealed only between friends through correspondence or face to face discussions. When he tells us about their wives the same sources to which we add personal journals describe us the characters both of the husbands, who used to be extremely agitated and have anger outbursts like Al. Philippide, and those of their wives; this is how we found out that most of them had sacrificed their lives and careers for the glory of their husbands, whom they had followed everywhere no matter the situation helping them to become successful: Ecaterina (Catinca) Iorga confessed on the 30th April 1932 that *One thing is for sure: I do not regret having served a great mind, maybe unique at the moment.*

Intimitatea amfiteatrelor… closes the cycle of the books dedicated to the Romanian intelectuals from the philosophy and letters faculties at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, succeeding to make us understand the époque, the academic and political environment in which they worked and least but not last to discover them as humans, models, husbands and parents.

In the end we can say that the present book is an attempt to know and understand the university professors with the help of the biographies because this is how the understanding of their professional and private environments was possible and also the understanding the realities of the existing educational institutions with their advantages and disadvantages.

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Dumitru Sandu. (2010). *Lumile sociale ale migraţiei în străinătate [Social worlds of the migrations abroad].* Iaşi: Polirom, 227 pp. ISBN: 978-973-46-1650-3

Emigration is a major demographic phenomenon of our time, and Romania could not avoid it. In the recent years were published several works - based on both quantitative and qualitative researches - related to Romanian migration after 1989. The challenge of this volume consists in its attempt to underline the huge variety of situations and life conditions included by the migration phenomenon. Romanian migration abroad is a surprising and relatively well known phenomenon, most of the information being processed by the media. This

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volume seeks to make sensitive, through a different path, both the public and the institutional elites, in order to determine the development of proper migration policies, which in our country are totally lacking.

Dumitru Sandu, professor at the University of Bucharest, Department of Sociology, is one of the best observers of the Romanians' migration in the world.

Lumile sociale ale migrației în străinătate (*Social worlds of the migrations abroad*) is the latest book by Dumitru Sandu, in which the author has followed the migration flows since 1990, the countries of destination and the evolution of Romanian communities abroad. Although it is difficult to identify valid reasons for the Romanian migration after 1989, Sandu manages to create a hierarchy, beginning with the economic roots that are the main cause of migration in most situations. An important aspect of this book lies in the reproduction of a number of interviews given by the author on Romanian migration, but also interviews with Romanian immigrants. The result is a number of very useful tables concerning the meaning of immigration, the immigration flows and intentions, differentiated by education, the profile of the immigrant, remittances etc. The book is devided in two parts, *Emergența noului sistem de migrație al României* (*The emergence of the new Romanian migration system*) and *Valori, proiecte și remitențe în lumile migrației* (*Values, projects and remittances in the worlds of migration*). As a preferred working method, the author uses the quantitative analysis of the immigrants' behavior, in Romania as well as abroad, the list of tables resulted out of this type of analysis being a consistent, remarkable one.

In the first part of the book, the reader follows the path of any immigrant that becomes part of the international migration flow. Starting from the matrix that motivates the temporary emigration abroad, from the projects of the migrants, the author reaches the reconstitution of the steps, mainly using the collective memory of the migrants. Interviews with Romanian migrants who work abroad confirm, once again, that the low economical level of Romania (a country with a GDP per capita of only 47% of the EU in 2008), led many Romanians to temporarily leaving their country and families, for a living not necessarily better as much as strictly decent. The system of migration since 1989 has been de-structured, once because of the transition to a market economy, but also because of the exodus of the Germans in the early 90's, followed by the economic recession of 1997-1999. The migrations of Romanians abroad changed during these 20 years, both as a phenomenon and as assumed form. If in the 90s prevailed the permanent migration and we can easily state that it was highly selective, since 2001 its volume got lower, the temporary migration with the purpose of working abroad became the stronger preference among migrants. The permanent migration from the early 90s was most of all politically determined, but since 1994 the Romanian ethnics migrate without the political connotations of their gesture.

According to annual surveys, the state of social discontent in Romania has reached the maximum post-December in the period of 1999 to 2000. The author stresses this sensitive aspect, as the rise of temporary migration that took place during this period was based on socio-economic dissatisfaction. 2001 brings significant changes among the factors of the equation that conditioned the departures of Romanians: the free movement within the Schengen area, a change much expected by many Romanians.

A strong-point of the author regarding the international migration is given by the importance of internal migration, which played a considerable role in the external migration process. Dumitru Sandu's answer is a very simple one: if temporary migrations abroad in the early 90s were mostly originated in the urban areas, during the recession years the cities were greatly affected and the town-village migration has increased in intensity. Thus, the precentage of temporary migrations from the rural environment abroad has increased. The conclusions of the community census regarding migrations, coordinated by the author in 2001, as part of a project initiated by the International Organization for Migration, revealed that departures abroad of migrants from the rural arias were more intense in the villages with a higher proportion of returns from town to village. The villages with a large number of young people were the most affected.

The second part of the book, *Valori, proiecte și remitențe în lumile migrației* (*Values, projects and remittances in the worlds of migration*), raises interesting issues, related to the return migrations, as project and state of mind of the migrants, the remittances as forms of reorientation towards home, and the mentality of former migrant. Romania's EU accession meant a significant change for the departures abroad. The changes were structural, permanent emigration decreased from over 10.000 people annually, to 9.000 per year, for the period 2007-2008. The author has understood this freedom of movement of the Romania in EU as a factor that reduced the propensity towards permanent emigration. The composition of the migrants' groups has changed as well, with a decrease of medium-skilled migrants, in the favor of the low-skilled or high-skilled ones.

Based on a Spanish survey, *Encuesta Nacional de Inmigrantes*, 2007 the author made a comparison between the Romanian community in Spain and other categories of immigrants, in order to better understand the degree of orientation towards home of the each category of immigrants that live in that country. Thus, Dumitru Sandu achieved a quantitative measurement of the orientation of the migrants, towards home or the place of origin, based on a series of components, such as sending money back home over a certain period of time, frequent communication with those left behind and of course the existence of a well structured plan for returning home. According with this index the author stress that there is a not a Romanian specific behavior in terms of orientation towards home, as some communities have a much more pronounced pattern of this sort. The orientation towards home is primarily socially and culturally determined, on different levels, according to the human capital, social, cultural and economic background of the migrants.

We must mention the importance that the author gives to trans-nationalism in migration, a phenomenon as real as it can be, that depends on the waves of immigration. Trans-nationalism focuses heavily on social and cultural patterns, moving across borders, and being devided in two: either marked only by targeting home, or ambivalent for those that see themselves as strongly engaged in the host society and with a strong attachment for the society of origin.

Of course, the behavior of migrants abroad cannot be a general one, as it is influenced by their socio-demographic and cultural caracteristics. Analytically speaking, each host society acts differently, with different immigration policies.

Finally, the author stresses that the circulatory migration of Romanian increased. Permanent or temporary emigration is replaced by an increasing movement between host countries and Romania, a kind of euro-commuting. Obviously the consequences of the galloping globalization can be seen on the return migrations as well, which tend to become temporary return migration, with circulatory accents. The author also points out the problems of re-integration of the migrants, as well as the issues raised by circulatory migration.

All to all, *Lumile sociale ale migrației în străinătate* (*Social worlds of the migrations abroad*) is not a simple work about the sociology of migration that deals with the problems of the phenomenon. Dumitru Sandu examines this phenomenon in terms of patterns of thought, of identity actions and affirmations, models included in the concept of the social worlds, as well as the effects of migration on those who have either stayed home or returned at some point.

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