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COHABITATION IN ETHNICALLY AND DENOMINATIONALLY MIXED SETTLEMENTS IN HUNGARY DURING THE TRANSITION FROM A SOCIETY OF ORDERS TO MODERN AGE

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Abstract: After the Ottoman rule, ethnically and denominationally mixed towns (oppida) emerged in large parts of Hungary as a predominant type of settlement. Till 1848 their inhabitants usually had the status of serfs. They developed specific forms of coexistence: below the formal community level, there were in fact separate villages, that hardly interacted beyond their economic concerns. The dividing lines between them disappeared only towards the end of 19. century, sometimes only after World War I. Associations were founded in these towns, too, but usually they had a specification according to language and denomination. Mezőberény (Békés county), inhabited by Hungarian speaking Calvinists as well as German and Slovak speaking Lutherans, and Szekszárd (Tolna county), re-settled in the 18th century by German und Hungarian speaking Catholics beside a pre-Ottoman population of Hungarian speaking Calvinists, serve as examples. They allow to demonstrate that differences in denominational dogmatics or decisions of the church hierarchy were not the reason for this phenomenon. Based especially on an in-depth historical-sociological analysis of the market town of Szekszárd by Z. Tóth, it is demonstrated that instead, different socioeconomic characteristics, conducts of life, subsistence and accumulation strategies, and patterns of intergenerational mobility of the respective members were in the background of these separate associations of people, who at the surface seam to share first of all the same denomination. Finally, it is discussed whether the reproduction of this distinction in a socially new form (the association) can be interpreted as an indication of the existence of denominationally delimited ethnic groups.

Keywords: religion, linguistic and denominational separation, local cultures, ethnic cultures, associations, transition to bourgeois society

Introduction

After Ottoman rule, ethnically and confessionally mixed market towns (oppidum) emerged as a widespread settlement type in large parts of the Great Plain in Hungary. Until 1848, their inhabitants usually had the status of serfs. These settlements developed specific forms of coexistence: below the level of the market town, separate villages existed side by side, and there were hardly any points of contact between their inhabitants beyond common economic concerns. These dividing lines did not dissolve until the late 19th century, and sometimes not until around the First World War.[1] Even in places, that were homogeneous concerning language and confession, the cultural integration of the settlers coming from different areas of the country took several generations (Szilágyi, 1995a, p. 226). These settlements are an interesting feature of Hungarian society till around 1900. Examples are, for instance: Mezőberény in the Great Plain, on the Harruckern dominion (Szilágyi, 1973; 1980; 1995b; 2000), Gyula (Kósa, 1994; 1997; Szilágyi, 1995c) and to some extent, Hódmezővásárhely (Gyáni, 1993), as well as Szekszárd in Tolna County (Tóth, 1989; 1990; 1997). These cases are by no means unknown, even if this is mainly the case among ethnologists, or, to be more precise, among those who read Hungarian. Trained as a social historian, I came across them myself when, in the context of a bigger study on 19th century Protestantism in Hungary, I was trying to understand what the everyday world of the members of the large Protestant churches was like and what it meant to be a Protestant.

Here, it is my concern to a) to discuss the socio-structural contexts behind these phenomena, to present the specific transitional forms that emerged on the way from estate-based to bourgeois society, namely at the micro level – not uninfluenced from the outside, but with an emphasis on their development at the local level and with a particular interest in the longevity of separation – ; and b) to point in particular to the observations of Zoltán Tóth and his model of interaction of developments on micro- and macrolevel in the process of social and cultural change in that period (Tóth, 1989).

Seen in this light, this essay is thus not an original research paper, but an attempt to point to a particular phenomenon in the social history of the Kingdom of Hungary in the 19th century, which promises also be of great interest to ethnologists, and at the same time to present a model for the socio-historical analysis of its developmental dynamics, which I consider to be very stimulat-

[1] An instructive overview: Rácz, 1995, beside this: Wellmann, 1989. Discussion of research concerning the overall development: Rácz, 1995, pp. 85-112. More focussed on individual arguments and theses: Makkai, 1985. Remigration: Makkai, pp. 1426-1427, p. 1436. On changes in the settlement network as a whole: Rácz, 1995, pp. 175-184. It should be emphasised that these settlements were market towns and not towns (privileged, royal free towns or cities) in the legal sense. On the specifics: Bácskai, 1989.

ing. It will then be discussed to which extent this reproduction of earlier dividing lines within the locality in this new social form can also be interpreted as an indication of the existence of a confessionally defined ethnic group or even as the continued existence of a confessional ethnic group.

The historical background

Based on existing older economic traditions and older settlement types, such larger and at the same time mixed settlements as described above came up as a preferred type after the Ottoman period. Particularly in the eastern lowlands, constraints because of the lack of labour, the problematic security situation caused by military campaigns, uprisings and spontaneous settlement movements of the 16–18th centuries, but also the effect of the tradition of extensive cattle breeding that had developed here since the late Middle Ages stimulated the concentration of people in rather a few, but bigger settlements, from which enormous parcels of land were used via outlying farmsteads. The Ottoman rule produced similar effects. All this let these market towns inhabited by serfs becoming a characteristic settlement type.

During the resettlement of large parts of Hungary after the end of Ottoman rule since the 18th century, organised settlement and spontaneous resettlement and migration within Hungary or into Hungary worked together. There was usually an autochthonous surviving population in and around the market towns, in the Plains often Calvinist. The state, regional authorities and private landlords tried to "re-populate" their possessions by bringing in settlers from abroad, preferably Catholics, often from the German territories, but sometimes also Protestants (Fata, 2014). An example is the Harruckern family in Békés. They also accepted German Protestant immigrants or settled Protestant Slovaks from the north of the Kingdom of Hungary. Due to this course of settlement movements, these market towns usually had ethnically and denominationally mixed populations. Homogeneous localities were an exception (Szilágyi, 1995a).

Specific features of development in the 19th century

The specific forms of coexistence, the separation along confessional and/or linguistic lines below the level of the market town included a feature, that seems to contradict general assumptions on the development of bourgeois society: the emergence of organised social circles, of civic associations, that were also separated along the mentioned dividing lines. In the 19th century, many associations came into being in these settlements, which were, however,

founded separately along these lines from the outset or, after a short intermezzo, were again run separately. On the one hand, there was an astonishing variety of associations, reading circles, etc., but on the other hand, there was no ideal-typical association of all, but rather of equals according to different criteria. While linguistic divides, as far as they still existed, may be regarded as an understandable practical reason for separate circles of socializing, the reproduction of denominationally separate associations is at least at first glance less self-evident. This even provokes the question, why their faith divided the members – or whether it was (only) their faith that divided them.

Modern social theory and social history regard associations as organisations that are, ideal-typically, made up by free individuals on a non-denominational basis in the pursuit of common goals (e.g. Keane, 1998; Kocka, 2000; 2000a). They are often examined within the theoretical framework of civil society, a network of relationships "of a modern, pluralistic, secularised society of free and independent individuals", "who regulate their relationships with each other peacefully and rationally, through competition, voluntary cooperation and associations of the composition just mentioned (Kocka 2000a, p. 482). Phenomena, as they came into being in these splitted market towns would thus contradict bluntly the expectations laid down in that theory. On the same time, conditions that are considered to be prerequisites to emergence and functioning of civil society, institutional arrangements including legal guarantees, markets, the public sphere, the possibility of free articulation and autonomous organisation of interests, the constitutional state with its opportunities for participation, especially in legal terms, only came up after the revolution of 1848/49 and the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 respectively. So, these peculiarly structured, largely agrarian settlements in the countryside give an insight into the specific dynamics of the mobilisation of structurally older social segments within the transition to a capitalist economy and a modern bourgeois nation state with its formal institutional system and even allow, via the observable mechanisms of continuing linguistic and especially denominational difference to observe processes that otherwise may be going on in more hidden forms.

Mezőberény

Mezőberény offers a particularly pronounced example of segregation as well as the institutionalisation of the interaction of the individual groups. The place is also particularly well researched.[2] Slovaks, Magyars and Germans

[2] Szilágyi, 1973; 1980; 1995b; 2000; the last one also taking into account more recent social-historical discussions. In the context of local history: Szabó, 1973; 1973a, esp. pp. 255-269,

were settled in Mezőberény at the beginning of the 18th century. All three groups established their own districts around their own church - the Calvinist Magyar in Magyarvég (the Hungarian "end of the village"), the Lutheran German in Németvég (the German part of the town), and the Lutheran Slovak in Tótvég (the Slovak part of the town) (Szilágyi, 1980, p. 272).[3]

All three parts of the village had their own inn, and the needs that could not be met by the household were covered by craftsmen in their own part of the village (Szilágyi, 1980, p. 323).[4] The difference in language as well as the expectation of the group had an effect on the endogamous marriage behaviour of all three groups. That played a particularly lasting role in the preservation of the separate customs and social circles.

The economic life - cattle breeding and agriculture - required coordination of the activities of the individuals as well as a common appearance towards the landlord. These interests and tasks were taken care of by central offices, which were occupied by representatives of all three groups. The judge, his deputy and the village head (bíró, törvénybíró, községi gazda) were always of different nationalities. The landlord proposed several candidates, from whom the community filled the offices according to the proportional representation system. The same was done with the jurors and the lieutenants responsible for maintaining public order (Szilágyi, 1980, pp. 286-289). The representatives of the community regulated the positioning of the herds, the order of pasture use (Szilágyi, 1980, pp. 290-292). They organised the lease of further land for the

pp. 269-288. Furthermore, there are older monographs on Mezőberény: Bonyhai, 1933 – 34; Skolka, 1988.

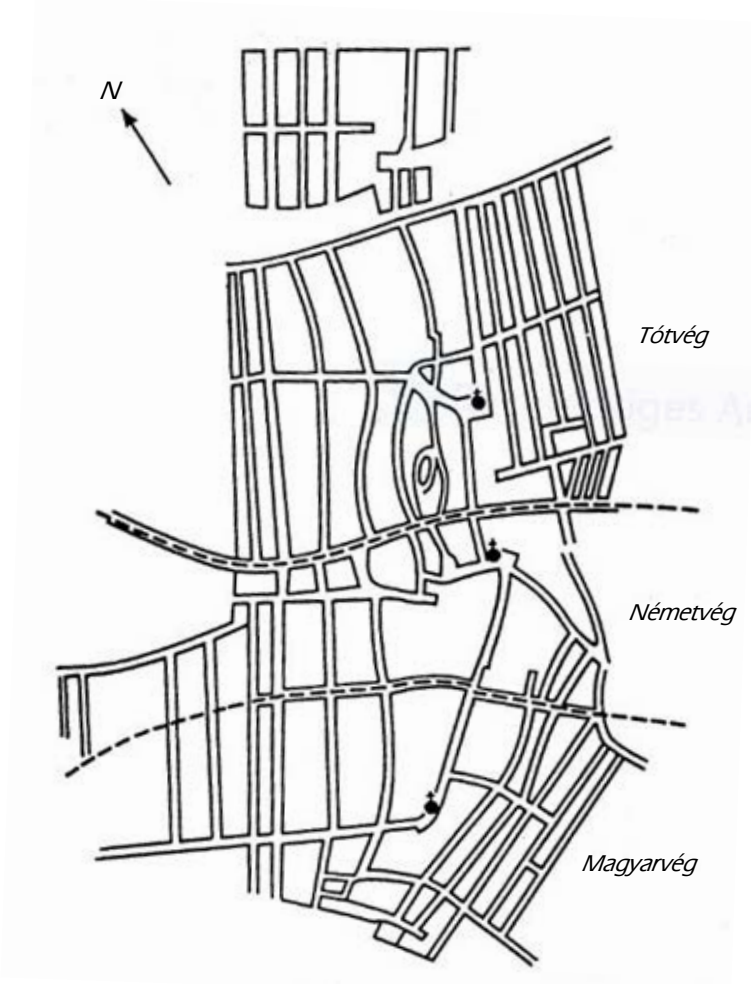
On the external relations of such rural settlements: Szilágyi, 2000a; as well as essays on other settlements in Szilágyi, 1995. On the comparative case of neighbouring Gyula inhabited by Reformed Magyars, Roman Catholic Magyars, German Catholics and Romanian Orthodox: Kósa, 1994; 1997; Szilágyi, 1995c.

[3] "The three churches [...] are as if they had ever been built in the central position of a village, all are surrounded by a small square, and from these squares proceed some important streets" (Szilágyi, 1980, p. 275). The essay further contains very descriptive photographs of houses built by representatives of the different ethno-confessional groups at different times. (Cf. also Szabó, 1973).

For reasons of simplicity as well as for the sake of an unambiguous a designation, the members of the individual groups will be referred to in the following as Catholics, Lutherans or Calvinists. Officially, the Lutherans were members of the Protestant Church A.B. (Augsburg Confession), the Calvinists or Reformed were members of the Protestant Church H.B. (Helvetic Confession). In Hungary in the 19th century, both called themselves "Protestants".

[4] Buying a house in another district was not forbidden, but it was also not customary. People from one´s own nationality had a customary right of first refusal in each case. At the borders of the districts, transitional zones developed which were inhabited in a mixed way (Szilágyi, 1980, p. 322) The German and the Slovak (Lutheran) cemetery were next to each other, the Magyar one at the other end of the village. Each inhabitant mainly knew his own part of the town, and in many cases was not at all familiar with the other parts of the town: there was no reason to visit them.

entire community, or for its representation of interests vis-à-vis other localities, and they negotiated with the landlord about the handling of jointly used land (land used by peasants AND the landlord) (Szilágyi, 1980, pp. 292-320).



Weichbild von Mezőberény mit den beiläufigen Wohnkreisgrenzen der drei Nationalitäten

Figure 1

Map of Mezőberény with the living areas of three nationalities.
Source: Szilágyi, 1980, p. 272

For everyday life, this meant that people hardly knew each other and hardly socialised beyond the boundaries of the group. Ethnologic studies have shown that for many of the inhabitants, each other's part of town was terra incognita. The lack of familiarity and the difference in language had a preserv-

ing effect on these relationships. But there was also no need to establish such relationships, neither in the context of the families' economic activities nor for their reproductive behaviour. An exception were only the aforementioned office holders. In the 19th century, the language of communication in their work was Hungarian, whereby the office holders were usually able to communicate directly with the inhabitants who addressed them in their own language. In emergencies, their deputies – each belonging to a different ethnic group – helped out (Szilágyi, 1980, p. 287).[5] It was only under the influence of the capitalist transformation of peasant economic forms that this system of the community of the market town began to disintegrate at the turn of the 20th century and then, more clearly, after the First World War.

In 1861, 4300 of the total 10,613 inhabitants of the village were Lutheran Slovaks, 2631 Lutheran Germans and 2492 Hungarian-speaking Calvinists. In 1900 Berény had 12,875 inhabitants, of whom 6,772 were of Magyar, 2,649 of German and 3,239 of Slovak mother tongue (in addition to 15 others). According to their denomination, 8,416 were Lutheran and 3,340 Calvinist (Bonyhai, 1933-34, pp. 38-39, p. 78). The club life of the 19th century, which also spread in the lowlands in rural society after 1848 (Reisz, 1988; Virágh, 1968)[6], also affected Mezőberény. Until the First World War, the "Reading Association in the Hungarian End" (Magyarvégesi olvasóegylet) was founded in 1878, the "Social Reading Association" (of the Germans) (Társadalmi olvasóegylet) in 1880, and the Casino in 1882, 1883 the "Reading Society in the Slovak End" (Tótvégesi Olvasóegylet), 1883 the "National Circle" (of Slovaks) (Nemzeti Kör), 1894 the "Farmers' Circle" (Gazdakör), 1896 the "Craftsmen's Circle" (Iparoskör), 1896 the "II. Reading Society in the Slovak End" (Tóthvégesi II. Olvasóegylet), in 1898 the "Association of Agricultural Workers" (Földművelő munkásegylet), in 1905 the "Home Circle" (Otthon kör) (run by Slovaks) and in 1906 the "Zentraler Volkskreis" (of Germans) (Central Circle of the People/ Központi népkör) (Szabó, 1973a, p. 264).

This means that, on the one hand, a large number of voluntary associations developed in the locality, with the aim of political orientation, cultural development, sometimes professional orientation and sociability, but which, on the other hand, remained largely within the linguistic-confessional dividing lines, which were also conserved. The new forms thus continued the more traditional forms of sociability and interaction within the town – or within the

[5] They thus had a special status in the community in this respect as well, in that they were able to communicate across the traditional dividing lines. In addition to the persistence of linguistic-confessional segregation within a locality, however, the deliberate organisation of language acquisition for children can also be observed in Hungary in the 18th and 19th centuries, who were given to the families of confidants for shorter periods (about a year) in order to learn German or Hungarian in particular (Kósa, 1981).

[6] Problematic in its evaluations, but informative as an overview is: Pölöskei & Szakács, 1962.

three villages. All three nationalities "did not create these forms of politicising and culture with a sphere of activity and social connection related to the whole 'town'" (Szilágyi, 1973, p. 215).

The association of the craftsmen and the local upper class deviated from this pattern. According to the list of associations just presented and further evidence from Ferenc Szabó, this also applied to the agricultural workers. As early as 1891, preparations had been made for the foundation of an agricultural workers' association. However, this was banned after the clashes on 1 May of that year in Békéscsaba and the reapers' strike in the summer. The "II. Reading Association in the Slovak End", according to Ferenc Szabó, was an attempt to re-establish it, carried by the one hundred most active members of the dissolved workers' circle. Against this background, Szilágyi even sums up:

> All three nationalities had their own association for the wealthy farmers, for the small owners, and for the organisation of the agrarian proletarians, or rather they did not create these forms of politicisation and culture with a sphere of activity and social connection related to the whole 'city' (Szilágyi, 1973, p. 215).

If we look at the social composition of the village, it becomes clear how largely – in relation to the proportion of the groups in the total population – the traditional structures were continued in new forms. But it also becomes clear how the group was constituted, which organised itself linguistically and denominationally. In the 1890s, 98 % of the inhabitants lived from agriculture (Bonyhai, 1933-34, p. 42). 2 % of those engaged in agriculture were agricultural labourers, all others were small or medium farmers.[7] 344 inhabitants were craftsmen, of which 39 were masters with journeymen and 238 worked alone. This group, which was different from the great majority of the population by its acquisition and everyday culture, as well as the agricultural workers, were the ones who united interethnically or interdenominationally. The casino, frequented (or maintained) by a relatively constant circle of members, was, it can be reconstructed, the meeting place of the upper class made up of the educated, tenants and larger landowners.

How exactly the craftsmen's association and the agricultural workers' association were composed cannot be reconstructed for the time being, if at all. On the one hand, the situation regarding their remaining records is not favourable: as a rule, there are only the minimum records of the statutes to be submitted to the Minister of the Interior, or occasional activity reports for their own membership. Ethnologic research has made it possible to qualitatively confirm the nature of the composition. Research into the history of the numerous peasant and agricultural workers' associations in the lowlands has generally been

[7] In Bonyhai's estimation, this also meant that the activity of the local agricultural workers' association remained within the legal framework.

more interested in their social composition (as, for example, in the case of Gábor Gyáni's differentiated study of Hódmezővásárhely with its Reformed-Magyar majority and a Catholic-Magyar minority) (Gyáni, 1993; 1995). Or it has been interested in the programmes of the associations, in the older research often in their congruence with the objectives of the social-democratic workers' movement. There are studies on the dispersion of such associations, or on their reading material. Even their linguistic composition was estimated, often based on rallies of those concerned in socialist papers, or on conjecture in view of the names of persons appearing in police reports or association files. At least the nationality question has brought attention to this structural axis. There was even less interest in the confessional axis, given the interdenominational manifestations of the liberal age and the minor role religion played as an engine of change in traditional modernisation paradigms. Thus, beyond the outlined situation, mainly only research questions can be compiled, and it is not surprising that the observation of the described connection comes precisely from Ethnology.

Szekszárd – the general situation

The case study of Szekszárd in Tolna County allows even more profound observations. Zoltán Tóth's Tóth (1943 – 2015) socio-historical research has made the structural and cultural changes particularly accessible, that local society underwent in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Tóth, 1989; 1990; 1997). Tóth started from a household analysis of the place around 1900, for which he used orphan chair`s files as main sources (normalized sample according to census data on the local population), supplemented by registers of births, marriages and deaths and further material that permitted to reconstruct family histories over several generations (Tóth, 1989, esp. pp. 14-21). In this course he evaluated data from the 1870ies till the pre-war years. Originally aimed to accompany a current panel from the 1970ies, he realized the presence of many asynchronous elements which, howsoever, survived over time and reappeared in household models, mobility patterns etc. even in the 1970ies (Tóth, 1989, esp. pp. 7-14, pp. 124-129). For this reason, he used the case study to develop a thesis about general patterns of social change in local society within its interference with larger social and economic developments. His aim in his compelling and unfortunately, largely unknown monography was thus rather the understanding of the complex dynamics of local social change. Within that, religion was not an issue of assumed primary importance in the first run. In the following, I rely on his evaluation to reconstruct the patterns determining the dynamics in club life, especially its formal separation according to the confession of the members, as described above.

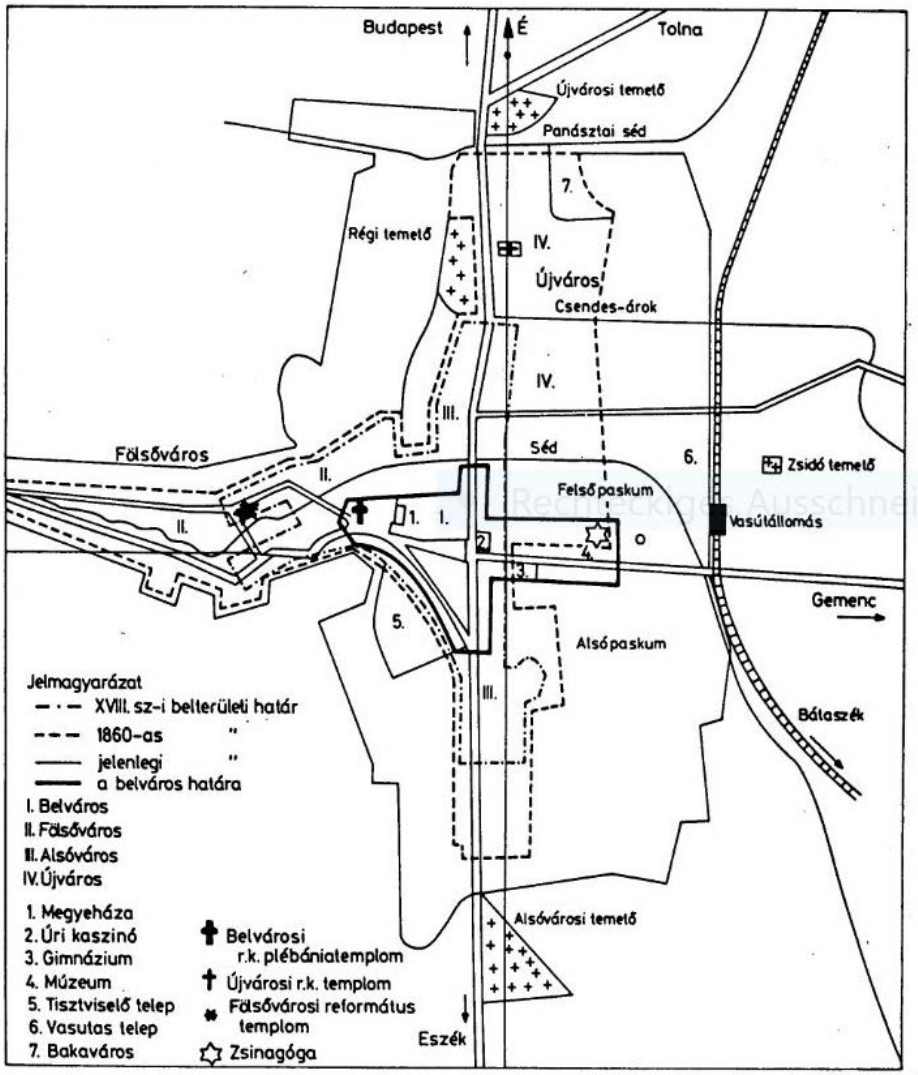
Since the end of the 17th century, German and Magyar Catholics had settled in Szekszárd alongside the autochthonous (pre-Ottoman) Magyar Calvinists. Both confessional groups lived in segregation. Next to the Reformed upper town, a Catholic lower town developed, which was supplemented by the new town with its second Catholic parish church during the city expansion in the 19th century (Szilágyi, 1990, pp. 95-102). The districts had their own infrastructure, their own craftsmen. While the Germans largely assimilated linguistically until the turn of the 20th century, the confessional segregation remained.

This segregation is also clearly visible in the settlement pattern (Fig. 2). At the end of the 19th century, an inner city developed in the village as an assimilation core. It was grouped around the two old churches, and the synagogue of the now emerging Jewish community was also built there. In this inner city, the traditional confessional segregation was dissolved. It was replaced by segregation according to income and occupation.

Around 1900, most of the intellectuals, all of the entrepreneurs and a large proportion of the civil servants with higher education lived in this inner city. The traditional craftsmen and farmers of the market town gradually moved out of this area. The social difference was also reflected in the townscape, where the traditional peasant houses built lengthwise across the plot were replaced by peasant houses closing the street front. Forms of occupational or income segregation on the outskirts of the city were the railway housing estates or the villas built towards the vineyards around the turn of the century, or the emergency housing of the proletarianized lower class. In the older neighbourhoods, however, which retained their rural-village character, confessional segregation persisted (Tóth, 1989, p. 36).

Economically, Szekszárd was characterised by cattle breeding, grain cultivation, but above all viticulture. After the division of the once landlordly or jointly used meadows, the area cultivated with grain, but above all the vineyards, was significantly expanded. Once situated on an important north-south trade route, it was connected to the railway in the 1880s. Temporarily it sank to the status of a large municipality, but its position as a county centre accelerated the development of the market town. In 1891 the market town had 14,325 inhabitants. Of these, 13,764 were of Magyar and 476 of German mother tongue (i.e., 3.32 %). 10,944 or a good three quarters were Roman Catholic, 2,154 or a good 15 % Reformed, and the next largest denominational groups were the Israelites (847 = 5.91 %) and the Lutherans (303 = 2.12 %) (A Pallas Nagy Lexikona, 1897; Szilágyi, 1990, p. 181).[8]

[8] In 1847, 1896 out of the then 9600 inhabitants (or 19,6%) had been Calvinists, and 7726 Catholics (Szilágyi, 1990, p. 181).



Szekszárd belterületi határának változása

Figure 2

Szekszárd's inner boundaries and their changes
Source: Tóth, 1989, p. 29

The "urban" centre, the assimilation core, represents a difference from Mezőberény. This can be explained less by the number of inhabitants than by the different development incentives provided by transport and administrative functions. The coexistence of ethnic and confessional groups in Szekszárd was also regulated in less detail. While in Mezőberény (and also in neighbouring

villages with Catholic inhabitants) the lord of the manor treated his subjects in a confessionally neutral way[9], the lords of the manor of Szekszárd were first the abbots of the Benedictine monastery newly occupied at the end of the 17th century, and then, after its property was added to the school fund, "the manor", that rather supported the Catholic community (Szilágyi, 1990, pp. 112-114, pp. 140-144, pp. 155-156). The abbots in particular tried to oust the Calvinists, so that their institutionalised participation in the offices of the corporate society only became possible after the Edict of Tolerance.

The case of the associations

In Szekszárd, too, the segregation of the confessional groups also affected the development of the associations. In the 1840s the Casino and the Szekszárd Women's Association were founded, as well as the Economic Association for Tolna County and a Singing Association with its headquarters in Szekszárd. After the violent repression of the bourgeois revolution of 1848/49, in the years of neo-absolutism, they united representatives of all groups of the population in the rejection of Viennese politics. They functioned as camouflage organisations of political self-understanding and communication. The choral society or singing club was therefore even banned. In the sixties, these associations fell into crisis. First, tensions arose between the political factions of the membership arose. The latent opposition between nobles and peasant burghers became virulent due to the twists and turns of the constitutional question as well as the land replacement in the course of implementation of peasant liberation, and divided the membership (Tóth, 1990, pp. 322-323).

A new wave of associations was founded after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867. In 1871, the "Civic Reading Circle" (Polgári Olvasókör) was founded as a bourgeois counter-foundation to the Gentlemen's Casino (Úri Casino). Politically, it represented the direction of the Independence Party – in contrast to the conservatism of the aristocratic Casino. Its members were Catholic entrepreneurs and large farmers – the "peasant bourgeois" of the market town. The women's organisation of the association was the "Szekszárdi Polgári Nőegylet" (Szekszárd Civic Women's Association), founded as early as 1868.

In 1873, they were followed by the "Gymnastics and Fire Brigade Association" (Tornász- és Tűzoltóegylet). This essentially covered the educated, the civil servants who worked for the city and county and in a few larger private firms, the so-called "people in the coat" ("kabátos emberek"). It did not have

[9] Freedom of religion belonged to the privileges given to the settlers by the Harruckern (Bonyhai, 1933-34, p. 22; Implom, 1973, p. 97).

firefighting equipment, but part of its attraction was an expensive uniform, the purchase of which was socially selective. From the late 1870s onwards, other sports clubs emerged from it. After a failed attempt in the sixties, the Elementary School Teachers' Association (Tanítóegylet) was re-established in the seventies, which saw itself as non-denominational. It served the pursuit of professional goals as well as socialising. The Merchants' Association, founded in 1891 and later renamed “Handelscasino”, brought together wholesalers, especially Jewish wholesalers.

In 1872, the Trade Association (Iparegylet) came into being. The founding of such trade associations was compulsory in parallel with the dissolution of the guilds. Since 1896 it had its own Young Men´s Association (Legényegylet), organized by the Catholic priest. The real cultural association of the craftsmen was the Table Society (Asztaltársaság), which met from 1896 with approved statutes, but in fact had been meeting for longer. Its members were recruited from the Catholic craftsmen of the village. On the fringes of this culture of the traditional market town was the printers' trade association (Szakegylet) from the 1880s.

The formative organisations of the peasant milieu were the Roman Catholic and Calvinist reading circles. The "Catholic Reading Circle" (Katholikus Olvasókör) was founded in 1896 by the Catholic priest. As a youth organisation, the Catholic Circle (Katolikus Kör) was affiliated to it and soon another youth association in the New Town. A second such Catholic reading circle was also founded there in 1899, which was active from 1907 under the name Roman Catholic Social Circle (Római-katholikus Társaskör).

The "Calvinist Reading Circle" (Református Olvasókör) was not formally founded until 1900. However, it was preceded by the "Szekszárd Reformed Book Society" of 1879, which had set itself the goal of developing the school library and using it as a community library, and which had also included a choral society.

In Szekszárd, too, the coexistence of the – in this case more clearly confessional – group differences become apparent. In Zoltán Tóth's summary:

> The trade association retained its Catholic character inherited from the times of the guilds, and the Jewish tradesmen and merchants went into the trade association, and also founded their own casino and cultural association. The peasants organised their reading circles, libraries and singing societies on a confessional basis from the beginning, with the support of the churches (Tóth, 1989, p. 70).

The associations with broader aspirations obviously did not have the desired or declarative integration power. Neither the old casino nor the civic casino nor the fire brigade association had this effect. Other associations, open in principle, were in fact largely limited to one denomination.

Linguistically, however, the inhabitants were nearly completely Hungarian-speaking at the end of the 19th century – even of the about 400 people who confessed to be German speakers only about 100 could not speak Hungarian, too) (Tóth, 1989, p. 55), and there were also enough challenges that they had to overcome together. These included the struggle with the estate for the ownership of the vineyards and pastures, the phylloxera plague that progressively destroyed the old crops in the 1880s, the river regulation (and later the ecological consequences of this measure), and the community's commitment to the railway connection. So why did all this not bring the different people in the comparatively manageable village together – among other things, in terms of organisation?

The explanation lies in the nature of the groups, which, if we only rely on statistical criteria, can be perceived different according to their denominations.

Historical background and group differences in a local society undergoing re-structuring: An interpretation

Some of the associations assigned themselves a guiding function for the entire community but were socially exclusive. This was true of the old aristocratic casino and the later bourgeois casino. The former united the traditional upper class, its role or intensity of use dwindled. The second virtually encompassed an upper class minus the nobility, primarily the large Catholic farmers and peasant entrepreneurs and the dignitaries. Its fees and representational obligations made it socially exclusive and at the same time signified a difference from the puritan culture of the Calvinist upper city.

Initially, the Commercial Casino was not formally a Jewish association, but was professionally defined. In fact, however, its members were mostly Jews. That this was so, is due to the different accumulation and mobility strategies of the Jewish or the Catholic and Reformed wholesalers – which also existed in isolated cases. The latter invested profit in land where it seemed secure and where social models encouraged them to do so. The successful ones among them thus also disappeared again from the professional group. The Jewish wholesalers invested their money in business – not in the bank, not in securities, but in loans to customers and to other traders. They did not buy land but expanded their business. The organisation of this type was the Commercial Casino.

The teachers at the elementary schools organised themselves interdenominationally – they were too marginal and, above all, too impotent materially for the bourgeois as well as the aristocratic casino, which they could have joined

in principle, given the cultural goals of their association as well as their own aspirations:

> The clubs were organised like companies, with foundations and shares. The casino, the reading circle and the women's club were also places of diversion, excluding the mixed audience of the pubs and cafés, with their own subcontractors who rented the wine bar there, charged fees for the use of the billiard table or playing cards on top of the high membership fees. The costumes in which the nobles of the town or its citizens appeared and competed at the balls and events were also unattainable for their wives and daughters [of elementary school teachers and minor civil servants, J. B.]. Every charity ball where they were confronted with their own material impotence in the face of donations [...] was a real shock. The white-collar class, even if they aspired to rise to the 'ruling middle class' (úri középosztály), immediately felt their material as well as rank inferiority (Tóth, 1990, p. 325).

After an attempt to found an employees' casino failed in 1893, at the height of the phylloxera plague, they did not make a new attempt to found such an association, which would have once again highlighted their inferiority.

The fire brigade association captured the middle class, the "people in coats". It remained small and a foreign body in the market town. The peasants who cultivated their vineyards did not need sporting exercises under the guidance of a gymnastics master, and when there was a fire, the firemen's club looked on in the absence of a fire engine of its own – but it became the forerunner of later sports clubs.

The Table Society of Craftsmen was conceived as an association of the Catholic milieu, by one of the goals it pursued – the cultivation of the Magyar language. The Germans working on their assimilation here were Catholics, whereas the Calvinist village was traditionally Hungarian (and spoke a different dialect from the lower village until the 20th century).[10] But this cultural association of craftsmen was also Catholic because of this craft base, as well as the trades association, which took its members from the discontinued guilds, and with them its Catholic spirit and customs. Why were there hardly any Calvinist craftsmen in Szekszárd around 1900?

On the one hand, there are differences in the mobility strategies of the Reformed and Catholic peasants, i. e. in the segment of the market town with which the craftsmen were generally intertwined (Tóth, 1989, pp. 42–71; Tóth, 1997). For the Catholic peasants in Szekszárd, it was a strategy of intergenerational mobility to have their sons learn a trade while having a comparatively large number of children.[11] In this strategy, which avoided too high a division

[10] The Reformed Magyars spoke the short e (ë) as "ö", the Catholics as a short "e" (ö-ző/, ë-ző akcentus, Tóth, 1989, p. 28).

[11] This applies to Szekszárd and by no means to the whole of Transdanubia or other regions! (Andrásfalvy, 1974; 1997)

of inheritance, the pattern of the Germans assimilated into the group also had an effect – as did their later age at marriage.

As a deeper analysis of social mobility within the market town shows, the Calvinist segment of the traditional peasant-artisan-population was to a bigger part immobile than the Catholic one (Tóth, 1989, p. 37-53). If they were mobile in intergenerational terms, the Calvinists skipped this level of craftsmanship and let the – comparatively few – children, if not the only child to inherit the farm at all, acquire as much schooling as possible. These educated, these people with diplomas, however, were then often found outside the market town. The aversion to craftsmanship, which was also reflected in this mobility strategy, was moreover an after-effect of the religious compulsion of the guilds, the compulsion to participate in their Catholic ceremonies. Previously, the nobles were the most likely to have an alternative – and until the 1850s there were also Calvinist – noble – craftsmen in Szekszárd. After the abolition of their tax privileges, however, they or their sons gave up their craft and moved away (Tóth, 1989, pp. 68-69; Tóth, 1990, pp. 320-321).

The two peasant cultures – roman Catholics and Calvinists – were also the ones that founded the reading circles and singing societies of the peasants. They were the vast majority of the market town; they founded societies, that were confessionally bound from the start. But, regarding the patterns of economic behaviour, of accumulation, of child number, and mobility: What we are dealing with, then, are groups of people whose *lifeworld cultures* differed beyond the denominational contrast. These cultures, these ways of life were rather just bound to, combined with, intertwined a confession, that appeared then as a tangible characteristic on the surface. Their denomination is just the marker that can be observed in statistics and in censuses.

To quote Zoltán Tóth:

> The social groups begin to adapt to capitalist conditions on the basis of their own, previously formed culture. The culture, continuous even in its changes over a thousand years [...] permeated even the small things of life much more deeply than could be limited to the theological and political directions of the church or the religious behaviour (vallásos viselkedés), which is very much bound to fashions. [...] Yes, it was precisely the narrowing of the sphere of influence of the churches, above all the Catholic Church, and the secularisation much lamented by it, that brought the confessional folk culture deposited as tradition to the surface [...] (Tóth, 1990, p. 319).

Beyond this, there are elements that influence the specific inner cohesion of the two main social units. An important factor in the background is the change taking place within the linguistic and confessional groups. Tóth´s analysis of social mobility drew his attention to the different cultural patterns of nationalities that came together in mixed marriages, usually with identical religions, and were newly amalgamated (Tóth, 1989, p. 37-53). "The centre of

assimilation is the mixed marriage of partners from different nationalities." (Tóth, 1989, p. 56) While the language of the partners remains unknown in the registers, homogeneous or specifically mixed (in the case of Szekszard mainly Magyar-German) “assimilation groups” can be determined by cross-sectional surveys of the surnames of the spouses (in the case of first marriages) and the extent of the diversity of surnames within the denominations. These data do not give information about the nationality, that the individuals in question or their households declared or tor belonged to. They only point to the cultural influences that amalgamated within the newly arising Magyar nationality, as it also appeared in Szekszárd at the turn of the century. By this, it is also possible to differentiate between an overwhelmingly stable Hungarian-Reformed unit with a prehistory that basically lacked mixed marriages within the Reformed households, and a Catholic population that amalgamated several cultural patterns, with inner segments, that covered several structural segments of the market town. (Above, some of these influences were discussed, for instance in the Catholic family pattern).

With respect to these developments, Tóth regards the older confessional-linguistic groups with their specific cultures as “ethnic groups” (etnikum) – “these groups that are identical concerning their nationality, but different concerning their origins and ways of behaviour”, in contrast to nationalities (nemzetiség) in the sense of “national minorities” or remaining non-Hungarian speaking and/or otherwise identifying parts of the population (56). While he analysed a large amount of practical behaviour of and life-time decisions made by the people in his sample, his differentiation as made here, in contrary, tends to a rather structural-functionalist or “naturalist” view of “groups”. I suggest not to take it literally but to continue the argumentation, instead. That will also strengthen the plea for the importance of confessional ethnic groups or, for confessional-linguistic ethnic groups in a historical perspective. In other places, he himself argued in more anthropologic terms by pointing out that the confessional ethnic groups into which the peasant society of the market towns was divided, certainly had their own "we-consciousness", which had its basis and found expression in different dialects, clothing, family life, fertility and customs. These in turn also determined the later direction of the social development of these groups (Tóth, 1990, p. 319). For the lack of space, I will only briefly go over some arguments made by Richard Jenkins, referring to the facts already introduced above.

As in most historical case studies, we are unfortunately unable to ask those involved retrospectively about their assessment of themselves as joint actors or the "others", or watch, how situational decisions were being made. In their everyday practice, however, factual demarcations and preferences can be observed. If we follow Jenkins' outline of the 'basic social anthropological model of ethnicity' (Jenkins, 2008, p. 1, 14, 42; see Barth, 1969), it can be

argued that in Szekszárd the reproduction of a dividing line in the historically new form of the association obviously emphasises and interacts with a cultural differentiation. We cannot directly trace "personal self-identification" but do it through self-assignment to denominationally labelled associations. In this sense, phenomena existing around 1900 as well as the activities of the associations can be interpreted as elements of at least two larger confessional ethnic groups, one Reformed and one Roman Catholic, in the town. In the background, we have political and economic factors that have influenced the diversity of groups by limiting or expanding their opportunities in the course of history and that have become experiences of spaces of opportunity, limitations, and possible resentments. This refers to the practical exclusion of Protestants from guild membership and local offices, in other words the economic and other consequences of a categorization densely interwoven with Habsburg religious politics as well as the practices of the abbots as lords of the local estate. General parallels to Jenkins' discussion of the construction of Catholic identity in Northern Irelands (Jenkins, 2008, pp. 96-112) can be observed. Beside the churches themselves, local confessional elementary schools, which could never be united within one common community school despite well-meant attempts by middle class deputies (Tóth, 1989, pp. 69-70) may have contributed to the maintenance of borderlines, as well as the narratives of national history told in them or in the context of church ceremonies and festivities (Brandt, 2002; Jenkins, 2008, pp. 118-120), and the ongoing existence of two separate ways not just of spelling and pronouncing certain code words (see: keresztény/keresztyén for "Christian" etc., or the spelling of Latin words in a "Latin" or "Hungarian" way) , but of two specific dialects bound to the religious communities, were suitable to continue and enforce everyday practices of border definitions, the otherwise peaceful co-existence of the inhabitants notwithstanding. The virtual meanings of being Protestant or Catholic with their differing, historically produced options and role-models, in other words Jenkins´ "practical meaning" of these group classifications and categorizations, were also a starting point for specific aspirations for advancement and motivations for intergenerational mobility (or lack thereof) (on these, see Tóth, 1989, pp. 70-71).

The integration of these confessional ethnic groups into something like a civil society that jointly negotiates and formulates interests is extremely slow and takes place through intergenerational mobility and cultural change. This refers not only to advancement into other strata, especially the educated classes, civil servants and the liberal professions, who can then politically represent the interests of the group of origin to the outside world (as illustrated by patterns in local voting behaviour), and whose representatives then also have access to the interdenominational casinos and associations. But it refers above all to the fact that in the process of dealing with common challenges, the cul-

tures – the economic cultures, the lifestyle(s), the everyday culture(s), the world(s) of imagination – of all groups involved also change.

The same process, seen from the point of view of a common bourgeois national culture: Hungary's emerging bourgeois culture, which would, in turn, produce prerequisites for the development of a civil society in the sense of political science and social theory as introduced above, the emerging national culture, was just evolving at that time. It was formed according to Western models, and it only arose in the course of the emergence of a Hungarian entrepreneurial class, a civil servant class and an intellectual class. It was also introduced into the local society by the petty bourgeoisie and the subaltern civil servants who were oriented towards its model and who implemented the guidelines of the modernising and national political strategies of the ruling elite. In the same process, and in the friction with the interventions, requirements and impositions or offers of this bourgeois culture, the peasant milieu also changed, or more precisely: the cultures of the confessional ethnic groups also changed. They, again, had their internal division and marginal zones that we did not touch here (Tóth, 1989, pp. 9-14, 124-125; Tóth, 1990, pp. 318-322; Tóth, 1992).

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