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The Post-modern Shift and Development of the Countryside

Recently theories loosening binds between economic and social development have been strengthened. Such an undoubtedly risky construction probably demands a more careful formulation, i.e. that in mature modern (developed) societies, the direct effect of economy on social development is relatively diminishing. If this connection is quite obvious on a lower level of economic development, at a higher level the connection becomes much looser. This also means that changes in economy don't have a direct (mechanical) influence on the level of social integration. One of the basic characteristics of mature modern (post-modern) societies is the multiplication of basic development factors. The shortest descriptive hypothesis of this novelty is the „end of great stories“. From the social and, quite strongly, the spatial planning point of view, this change means, that development (or social change) cannot be explained singularly. Even until the present such procedure was incorrect, although it was (and still is) often used and even formally accepted. In all mature modern societies, most often coined post-modern societies, in recent explanations this mistake has become so obvious, that it is neither convincing nor acceptable.

This „post-modern“ shift (Inglehart, 1995), occurring in mature developed societies and/or high modern societies (post-modern societies) can also be registered on the level of values. The basis for the shift in values is in fact relative economic security or stability. Although the image can be deceiving, in the second half of the 20th century the share of economically endangered groups in developed modern societies has diminished radically, directly influencing the relativisation of „economic determinism“. Despite understandable scepticism and many second thoughts concerning the nature of the „post-modern“ shift, it is sensible to discuss the changes, that have caused the inadequacy of classical modernist concepts to suitably describe the conditions in developed societies.

The shift in values is essential even as a starting point for predicting future development. The values system is a structure that motivates and directs activities on the long run. Because Inglehart's research also included Slovenia, it makes sense to describe and elaborate on his initial findings.

The shift from modern to post-modern values can be structured into five basic sets:

a) The shift from „values of deprivation“ to post-modern „values of (economic) security“

The post-modern shift causes gradual disappearance or rather transformation of values that had emerged during a period of relative poverty (deprivation), therefore a condition in which economic survival – in fact a battle for basic existence – was the basic mobilising factor for the majority of the population. Within the life span of one or two generations, in Europe and in Slovenia, an unforeseen shift in social welfare and social security happened. Although from the historical point of view the change ap-

pears extremely swift, from the individual time perspective it still appears extremely slow and in a certain sense evades individual perception. The fact that traditional and modern societies were under the influence of deprivation, poverty, etc, obviously is not imbedded on the level of common sense (also Montanari, 1998).

b) Diminishment of effectiveness and lesser acceptability of buerocratic authority

„Hierarchical authority, centralisation, size, are becoming more and more suspect“ (Inglehart, 1995). There are two main reasons: principles (mechanisms) of mass have reached a point where their effectiveness is decreasing; simultaneously these mechanisms have reached a point where they are no longer justifiable, i.e. legitimate. The post-modern shift from traditional pre-modern authoritarianism and also modernist national authoritarianism thus causes enormous problems, when the legitimisation of spatial interventions is run according to classical modernist patterns, eg. by majority vote. Even in Slovenia, amongst other, such problems have been undoubtedly established.

c) Rejection of the West as a model and the collapse of the socialist alternative

The focus of Post-modernism are the dehumanised aspects of bureaucratic unpersonal modernism (The West) and of course the critique of state bureaucratic models (The East). According to Inglehart post-modernism has a built-in tendency for democratisation. For us this emphasis is important since it diminishes the naïve demonstrational effect and simple un-selective modeling of one self on the Western bureaucratic unpersonal administrative (planning) model.

d) Growing emphasis of „freedom and emotions“ and rejection of all types of authority

Post-modernism leads directly into democracy, especially because self-expression and political participation have become the highest values. Such development nevertheless doesn't occur without problems and difficulties. Traditional, i.e. modernist elites can obstruct it „indefinitely“, but by increasing social costs. Traditional, i.e. modernist institutions and macro-economic factors have a similar obstructive function. However, economic development enables and provokes growingly stronger (political) participation. Environmental and spatial problems and other open questions are undoubtedly among the strongest sources of mobilisation and motivation.

e) Lowering the prestige of science, technology and rationality

The central value element of modernisation and the whole modern era were the high levels of trust in the capability (power) of science and rational analysis, the basis of argumentative rationality. From this view-point one of the most important differences between modernism and post-modernism is the lowering of trust in science and technology, the one time saviours of humanity. Surprisingly enough, the diminishing credibility of expert systems is strongest in technologically most developed societies. This sign of post-modernism can definitely be felt in Slovenia as well.

Inglehart admits that there is a continuity between modernism and post-modernism, i.e. post-modernism, to a certain extent, continues and/or develops massive social pro-

jects that were started earlier, eg. processes of specialisation, secularisation and individuation. Here he refers to the debate concerning the question, whether the post-modernist society is a completely new quality or simply the last phase of modernism, i.e. the mature modern. The debate has been present amongst sociologists for a long time and certain respected theoreticians tend towards the „conservative“ interpretation, however discussion on terminology at this point isn't most important.

Inglehart therefore admits the continuity, but emphasises, that especially processes of secularisation and individuation have attained a new character. Although science and with it the „professions“ (expert systems) have lost their credibility, the process of secularisation is also continuing. The basic reason is again economic security achieved in developed countries. Nevertheless, although persuasiveness of „absolute religious systems“ in post-modernist societies is diminishing, care for meaning and goals in life is growing. This care is clearly manifested in growing environmental awareness and mobilisation.

Inglehart backs his findings with a comprehensive analysis of 47 variables, i.e. value definitions. These variables are grouped in two dimensions. The extreme values on the vertical „authoritarian“ axis are „traditional authoritarianism“ and „rational-legal, i.e. bureaucratic authoritarianism“. On the horizontal axis values are grouped between the extremes „values of deprivation“ and the tautological extreme „post-modern values“. These values compromise the actual values placed at the top of the values pyramid by Maslow (1954), i.e. values of self-realisation (self-expression).

In this constructed values space, by using factors analysis, Inglehart has grouped values into four rather distinct sets:

1. traditional values: religion, family, many children, national pride, obedience ...
2. values of deprivation: hard work, money, national responsibility, trust in science ...
3. rational-legal values: thriftiness, interest in politics, determination, responsibility ...
4. post-modern values: tolerance, ecology, leisure, health, friendship ...

In this structure we can notice, that the first and fourth set (traditional and post-modernist values) are practically completely +/- translations: work has been superseded by leisure, family by friends, national pride by civil-social movements, religion and obedience by freedom, tolerance and creativity. Scepticism to interpretation of such value space is however definitely acceptable. Even in societies where the „post-modernist“ shift has already happened, „hard“ economic force cannot be completely discarded. The comment that Inglehart was probably fascinated and somewhat naive concerning „novelties“ brought by the post-modernist shift, also stands. Many systems and regimes of belief and truth, many values, many ideologies have been alive for a long time, composing a „bricolage“, as Foucault would put it. Real emphasis in researching „shifts“ therefore shouldn't be the novelties themselves, but how and why at a certain point in time many existing and almost forgotten elements align into a new system, withstanding until a different one emerges. As Veyne illustrated „When one cannot see what he doesn't see, he also cannot see, that he cannot see“ (Veyne, 1998).

The discourse on methodological and theoretical conceptual questions, that this paper opens is therefore on certain levels essential. Nevertheless, although this debate cannot be conclusive or closed, numerous correlations between the grouped values systems point at relative consistency in ranking researched societies.

Ingleharts' research thus confirms the diminishing intensity of connections between material welfare and subjective perceptions of welfare. It is obvious that in societies, that can be termed post-modern, hard work isn't a highly esteemed value, self-realisation by women isn't closely connected to motherhood. There is also a clear connection between the sense of security and tolerance to foreigners. Special attention should also be given to the established negative relation between trust in science (professionals) and the set of „post-modernist“ values.

Certain positions of values are at first glance illogical. We could expect national property and national responsibility grouped around the vertical authoritarian axis. Analysis showed that these two values were grouped on the horizontal axis in the „values of deprivation“ set. This „peculiarity“ was explained by Inglehart by „geographic factors“ and geo-cultural positions of particular societies. Thus the research findings were confirmed adding logical and theoretical confirmation.

Grouping of societies (countries) in the coordinate space of values is very consistent and in high correlation with economic (social) development, as well as cultural, geographic ties:

1. Developed Nordic, predominantly Protestant societies, including The Netherlands and Switzerland, comprise the most homogenous and „most post-modern“ group.
2. The closest group are somewhat less developed predominantly Catholic societies (Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Great Britain and Canada); on the post-modern side, but slightly lower on the list of authoritarianism are USA, Ireland and Northern Ireland.
3. A relatively homogenous group is formed by „less (developed) and/or non-Catholic“ countries, former socialist societies (Russia, Estonia, The Czech Republic, Bulgaria ...), all of which are positioned in the quadrant marked by high authoritarian values and values of „deprivation“.
4. On the same pre-modern side, but positioned lower on the authoritarian list are Catholic South American countries and Poland.

In this context the position of Slovenia is also interesting. Slovenia is positioned close to the centre of the coordinate system and can be interpreted as „average success“. To be more precise, Slovenia ranks slightly above average, meaning closer to developed modern societies than to traditional pre-modern authoritarian societal structures. On the horizontal list it is slightly further away from the centre, closer to the pole marked by „values of deprivation“. Slovenia is closest to Portugal and Hungary. In sports terminology we could say, that Slovenia is ranked somewhat lower on the post-modernist scale than developed and North American countries and much better than former socialist societies, excluding former East Germany. On the axis of authoritarianism Slovenia is positioned much lower, similar to former socialist

societies, but better than Poland, South American Catholic countries and even better than Italy, Portugal, Spain and both Irelands.

Ingleharts' basic finding from this analysis is that there are quite distinct and cultural-spatial groups of societies. They are still connected by achieved levels of economic development, as well as corresponding cultural-historical disposition.

How does the research answer the question, In what relation are development processes of modernisation, post-modernisation and democratisation?

The remark that there is an extremely strong connection (correlation) between „post-modern“ values and democratisation, is very convincing. The correlation between democratisation and economic development was established, but it is of a lower order. Based on these findings, Inglehart concluded that the level of economic development on the higher level depends on the level of democracy in society and not vice-versa. Post-modern (economic) development depends on the level of superseding majority (modernist) democracy with, so called, „civil democracy“, i.e. development of civil society.

Beside this conclusion, even other conclusions can represent a basic conceptual frame-work in comparative research of values for predicting societal development in transition from modern to post-modern or from „classical“ modern to mature modern states. Inglehart concludes: „Every stable culture establishes a congruent system of authority. The Post-modern shifts implies a move from both traditional and modernist systems of authority. It is a response to the decreasing influence of hierarchic authoritarianism, whatever their formal justification, with strengthened distrust in hierarchic institutions in all industrial societies“ (Inglehart, 1995, pp. 402).

Based on the findings of the research, Slovenia (still) cannot be grouped in the so called post-modern group. In this two-dimensional space, Slovenia is literally positioned „in between“; on the vertical axis half way between traditional and modern perceptions of authority, on the horizontal axis in an undefined intermediate position between values of deprivation and post-modernist self-expressive values.

At first glance we could estimate the position as neither good nor bad. From the administrative or planners perspective this duality is a difficulty, because it doesn't give proper orientation. On the other hand, the „intermediate position“ is theoretically interesting, because it allows the construction of different, yet confronting scenarios. Theoretically it is even possible to predict, that it would be possible to conduct a relatively quick development move into the post-modernist phase. As Inglehart clearly showed, the most developed countries moved along the vertical axis, from the traditional phase towards modernism and then the post-modern shift happened, bringing the „post-modern“ societies in many aspects closer to the pre-modern societies. Nevertheless, pursuing a possible short-cut would be extremely demanding and definitely a risky affair for all controllers of societal development.

Above all enforcement of the principle „learning on ones own mistakes“ would be beneficial, instead of unselective copying and imitating foreign development patterns. The transi-

tion process, even more, joining the European Union, are ideal oportunities. From this point of view, the establishment of a relatively autonomous spatial planning system is a basic strategic task.

Searching for short-cuts is dangerous because it can misguide into attractive, yet over simplified possibilities. Although at first glance the possibility could be neglected, the production of certain „guidelines“ for simplified spatial development, leaning towards a (fictitious) ideal state, are still being produced. I am speaking about the guidelines for the project „Comprehensive development of the (Slovenian) countryside“ (Kovačič, 1995), that when trying to amend actual modernist incomprehensiveness, strongly veers towards a kind of nostalgic utopia. The fundamental error of such endeavour is of course, the underestimation and in certain aspects, complete disrespect for ongoing fundamental structural changes that occurred in developed modern societies, as Inglehart described, the „post-modern shift“. The trend for diminishing the importance of agricultural functions in the countryside or the connected process of „counter-urbanisation“, are definitely parts of this shift, substantially adding to the redefinition of the countryside. The fact (intentionally or unintentionally) seems to evade the perception of agricultural specialists. The fact that the post-modern shift appears as regression into former pre-modern times, it can be misguided into superficial and/or over-nostalgic motives of interpretation.

We are however witness to novelties, resembling already seen pre-modern spatial patterns only in image. Among the general reasons, encouraging these new functions of the countryside, we can find in literature concepts, such as growing „non-agricultural“ or „consumer“ uses for the countryside, ruralisation of industry, deconcentration of work places and flexible relations between the dwelling and employment environment, as well as completely economic reasons, such as cheap labour force etc. Among the more substantial reasons we can mention:

1. wider radius of daily migration around employment centres;
2. smaller production units and social problems in larger centres;
3. concentration of rural population in smaller urban centres;
4. diminishing number of („available“) rural population and saturated urbanisation;
5. different structural funds for rural inhabitants;
6. growing employment in special (local) industries;
7. industrial restructuring and the emergence of new disciplines, that have difficulties in traditional industrial centres;
8. improvements in traffic and communication technology;
9. improvements in education, health care and other infrastructure;
10. growing employment in the public sector and personal services;
11. success of special governmental spatial policies;
12. social programmes, private insurance, growing autonomy of the elderly and socially endangered;
13. growing migrations of the retired population;
14. changes in living preferences of employers/employees;
15. changes in age structure and household size structures, ageing population, rapid „disolution“ of families;
16. effects of economic recession: reversal of urban-rural migrations (Urry, 1995).

Other than these „objective“ changes, new spatial processes are also determined by changing awareness and relations to the natural/physical environment. „People vote with their feet“ and even in the most urbanised country, Great Britain, public opinion surveys constantly find, that many people would like to live in the countryside (72 % in 1994). The reasons are rather stereotype (Gallup, 1989), but their effectiveness cannot be denied. Other than more or less emotional reasons, an explanation which is in fact completely pragmatic is: greater spatial mobility (car ownership) has caused an exodus in the direction of clean air, spaciousness and living in small communities.

Because of the many changes, which are still intensifying, it has become clear that the countryside cannot be tied only to agriculture, although it is also true, that it is an important activity and will remain so for quite some time. The question that is gaining in importance is, can we monitor and direct development of the countryside within classical disciplinary limits and institutions, despite the changing functions of the space.

The project Comprehensive development of the countryside (Kovačič, 1995) especially because of its weak teoretical framework hasn't recognised and of course predicted (Ingleharts') post-modern shift, that can offer, even to the Slovenian countryside, a wide spectre of development possibilities.

Instead, it produced rather naïve and nostalgic retrospections of development, fed by pre-modern mythological „authentic communities“ and because of such alignment cannot promise much development possibilities. The example is concrete and quite convincing evidence of the „intermedaite“ state of the Slovenian society, i.e. wavering between modernism and traditionalism, thus still inspiring and allowing even „professional“ failings into pre-modern nostalgic mythology.

The fact that the research was created following initiative by the Ministry for Agriculture undoubtedly also demands attention, especially since such a vision of „comprehensive development of the countryside“ was used as the basic national strategy for development of agriculture and the countryside. Even on this basis we can confirm caution in probable over optimistic predictions of possible post-modernist shifts in Slovenia. The shift will commence when these nostalgic retrospections will become good hearted common sense folklore and not one of the milestones of the future national development strategy.

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The Indicators of Urban Development Following Principles of Sustainability

1. Introduction

Settlement policies (or the direction of urban planning process) are closely connected to social-economic development politics. The developments in place reflect the consequences of development decisions in all areas of life and work. For this purpose all questions with regard to spatial planning should be solved comprehensively, in connection with economic and social development, and take into consideration natural potentials and limitations, observing the principles for sustainable balanced development. This means harmonisation of economic and social development tendencies paralleled by the protection and improvement of the environment. It requires the joining of nature protection with economic and other policies and with decision making in all areas of activities. Concerning settlement policies, the sustainable viewpoint is extremely important, as the activities that are connected with settlement processes are the cause of the biggest changes and burdens on the environment.

When dealing with the advancement and execution of these policies we come across many problems and contradictions that need solving. The term sustainable development itself contains the contradiction, as it combines both the development and the protection viewpoint. We've ascertained that the sustainable balance won't be reached, if we don't reach higher economic and social dynamics in urban and rural areas alike (offer employment possibilities, economic development, social care) and also better nature conservation, including the conservation of cultural and natural heritage. It is not always easy to link both goals.

The contradictions we meet in the advancement of sustainable planning are as follows:

- market mechanisms (with consideration of only short term profits) work against planning, in particular against the sustainable orientation
- local actions are not always in accordance with national goals
- sectional work organisation can work against inter-sectional activity
- residents have opposing requirements that on one side include the spatial decision making influence and on the other they are users; the so-called paradox of the user against the citizen
- interests of the community are in opposition with the individual interests (known symptom at the problematic objects, i.e. not in my back yard) etc.

The challenge of sustainable development in the long run requires big changes in our thinking and behaviour, in social life and in the economy. Because of the rapid changes in the environment and accumulation of other economic and social problems we have to act as quickly as possible and reorganise. Apart from the development of firm mid and long-term principles we can gain a lot in the short-term by