

Colleges of Advanced Studies, as Key Institutions in the Field of Talent-care and as Possible Channels of Social Mobility. Brief Presentation and Evaluation of the Possibilities of Implementation in Romania and other Post-socialist Countries

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Abstract: *In our paper we will briefly present the historical background of the Hungarian Colleges for Advanced Studies. These institutions in the frame of the Hungarian educational system have been for decades identified with the concepts of “elite-training” due to both historical and professional reasons. We will not only mention the foreign examples which led to the expansion of these Colleges in Hungary but we will also present which social and political factors contributed to the appearance and evolution of the colleges. We also present the Colleges for Advanced Studies which recruit students of Roma origin, trying to push forward the Roma community’s social integration through forming young intellectuals. We try to analyze the social role of both the classical and the recently founded Roma colleges, and we demonstrate through qualitative research methods whether such institutions can contribute to the social inclusion of groups multiple disadvantages. We also analyze the possibility of transferring the concept and functioning methods of the colleges to other EU-member states, especially to Romania, taking into the consideration all the factors which would theoretically favor the possibility of transferring the best practices but also evaluating the aspects which would make this process more difficult, mainly as result of the various educational traditions and social attitudes towards such institutions in the two countries.*

Keywords: social inclusion; talent-care; higher education; colleges for advanced studies.

Cuvinte-cheie: incluziune socială; grijă pentru talente; studii superioare; colegii pentru studii avansate.

Introduction

The transition and adaptation to the democratic political system and to the capitalist

economic frameworks changed radically many perceptions and public policies related to the higher education. Many elements of the system, considered to be related to the old system’s

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ideological structure or simply not adequate to the requirements of the new era were changed and replaced by others. In Hungary, however, we can find an item in the higher educational system that has not only survived the radical changes but has also served as a model for numerous further initiatives. These are the so called Colleges for Advanced Studies (*Szakkollegiumok*-with the Hungarian term) which are not only widely acknowledged institutions of talent care, but due to their role in the transition to democracy (and especially due to the fact that they provided the country the young intellectual political elite that could contribute to the peaceful and bloodless transition) have remained key institutions of the talent-care even in the current Hungarian higher educational system.

In our paper we will present the origins of the Colleges, their evolution, their political activities in the key years of the late 80`s and their expansion in the last two and half decades. Our key research method is document-analysis.

After this presentation and in-depth analysis we will hypothetically check the possibility of implementing such institutions in other post-communist countries, especially in Romania. We`ll present for and against reasons related to the possibility of setting a network of such colleges in Romania. We hope that through this paper the readers and fellow researchers can have a more sophisticated idea about talent care in the frame of the higher education.

The origins of the Colleges for Advanced Studies in Hungary

In the history of higher education the roots concept of talent care go back till the beginnings as some argue that the very limited access to the universities (during the vast majority of the last millennium of in Europe) was a talent care process itself.¹ However, after the gradual increase of the number of the faculties, signs of hierarchical structures have appeared, and institutions like the famous Colleges of Britain (being best known as one of the ones belonging today to the Oxford-University) became widely

regarded as homes of talent care. Even today, these maintain their status as internationally acknowledged elite-training centers and thus have a strong influence on global politics and policy-making, as many leaders of various countries and institutions have been trained in these Colleges.

On the continent, the French higher education provides us examples for such institutions. For the oldest Hungarian College, the Eötvös College of Budapest, the example was the way of functioning of the French *École normale supérieure*. The original purpose of the institution was to train high-school teachers with a wide range of knowledge. The institution also had a social character as its main target group has been made up of candidates from rural and socially disadvantaged environment.

Throughout the first part of the 20th century, the talent care was remarkably efficient in Hungary, but not on the level of the higher education, but on the mid-level of the education (Setenyi, 1995). According to some authors the Hungarian high schools and gymnasiums of the time were one of the best ones of that age (Romsics, 2010). Analyzing the biographies of the Nobel Prize laureates it turns out that a large number of scientists who were later decorated with Nobel Prize have been students at these high schools.

The communist power-takeover ended up in a radical change in all the subsystems of the society, including the education. However, the idea of training elites in centralized institutions within the frame of a nationwide program has survived even in the era of the radical turns of directions and alternation of values (Hankiss, 1986). The colleges of the era concentrated mostly on the high-school level of the education and had two main purposes and “*differentia specifica-s*” in comparison with the traditional elite training. They openly intended to attract students from disadvantaged social circles, in large ratio from underdeveloped rural regions of the country. This not only fitted easily into the equalitarian political ideology of the era, but also served as a rational choice in the terms of

recruitmental basis for the future socialist elite groups.² Choosing as target group the lower classes of the society was not purely ideological but a rather precise evaluation of the era's value structure and the realization of the fact that the lower classes of the society were the only likely to be loyal to the communist regime. The main institution which coordinated the countrywide elite training of the age, the NEKOSZ, according to some experts preserved much of the methodology and of the pedagogical values of the former institutions (Romsics, 2010).

The colleges of advanced studies, as supporting institutions for the students from the higher education, in the form in which they still exist appeared in the early '70s. We cannot find any structural reason or centrally designed political project, but rather personal motivations of some university teaching staff members at the Karl Marx University of Budapest.³ The result of their efforts and of the relative academic freedom⁴ that has characterized Hungary in the period was the Rajk Laszlo College for Advanced Studies.⁵ Even the name chosen has largely tested the resistance and tolerance level of the political elite of the time.⁶ The tensions among the college and the political leaders were high right until the collapse of the communism, but beyond formulating clandestine political opinions the college has been a source of permanent intellectual criticism against the communist regime and the state socialism.⁷

The liberalization of the academic life permitted more and more critical thinking and manifestation for the members of the college. We believe, that this aspect is vitally important in order to understand why this could be an extremely attractive institution for all the students who desired to express political opinions (sustained by social-scientific argumentation and comprehensive critical thinking). As a result, many members of the colleges became more or less convinced about the importance of radical changes within the political and economic system.⁸

The contribution of the colleges to the change of the system

We believe that the presentation of the political and social characteristics is important to help the readers understand how these institutions, especially the Rajk College and the later founded Bibó István College could be favorable for the socialization of a critically thinking young generation (Buzder, 2005). The main reason for emphasizing the political dimension of the college was that on one hand, in the communist period the political thinking was permanently on the agenda and there has also been an inner rivalry within the members, some being more focused on scientific achievements while some being more active in political and socio-economic issues and activities. On the other hand, the change of the political system in 1989 brought into the spotlight the Colleges as a very significant part of the protagonists of the period were young ex-members of these colleges. Of course, this had less to do with the talent-care and scientific orientation, but offered a largely positive image to the colleges for the post-communist period and allowed them to get rid in a way of the political aspects and dedicated their resources and efforts to more profound academic activities and genuine talent care.

The change of the system from 1989, as for the young political actors, showed the following pattern: there were the ex-members of the Hungarian Communist Youth Organization (KISZ) who, even if many of them had a pragmatic attitude were widely regarded as belonging to the formerly ruling communists (Kéri, 1994) while the only other institutionalized form of youth political participation have been the colleges. As the result of intense cooperation of more colleges, mostly from Budapest, the youngest generation of the politicians from the first democratically elected parliament was largely based on ex members of these Colleges.⁹

The evolution of the colleges in the democratic era of Hungary

The election of the new, democratically functioning parliament has put an end to a long period in the lives of the colleges for advanced studies. Until 1990 these institutions not only served as frames for talent care initiatives within the higher education but were gathering institutions of many system-critical young students and meeting points of equally system-critical researchers, often as lecturers or regular invited guests of the colleges.

The post-communist era has actually put an end to such direct political role and the political affiliation of the colleges. The main tendency has been the professionalization with more and more emphasis on the high-quality academic activities.¹⁰

The three main principles of the functioning of the colleges are the academic evolution, the community based way of functioning and the social awareness and social responsibility.

The academic evolution reflects the attitude of the colleges according to which the first and foremost important purpose is the training of excellent students with the potential to become either internationally successful researchers or applied scientists. The main activities which serve this aim are the regular courses within the colleges (which at many universities are acknowledged as regular university courses and the students can get credit values for fulfilling the criteria, which shows how institutionalized the relationship is between the colleges and many universities). The tutorial activities are another efficient and by far the most personalized way of preparing the students, especially for an upcoming research or the elaboration of a scientific thesis or research paper. The tuition costs in both cases are fully covered by the colleges which thus can mean a huge financial relief for the students, or, from other aspect, these can be the only way for some to get in touch with highly ranked researchers from the given field of science in the country.

Beyond the courses and tutorial activities it

is worth to mention that competition as general principle is a dominant element of the academic activities within the colleges. Scholarships, awards at various scientific contest are highly-respected within the colleges and as we presented above the colleges dedicate both financial and institutional means to help the students achieve outstanding results, these being one of the main, but surely the more obvious outputs of the success. Various internships also mean an important element of the academic profile, and the colleges can potentially increase the chances of their members at applications as the colleges themselves provide recommendations and references for the institution where the given member would like to serve as a trainee.

The community based organization means on one hand a variety of academic and free-time activities with the purpose to strengthen the cohesion of the communities. As the importance of relationship-based social capital is a truly historical experience (Scott, 1997) in the case of the colleges (taking into consideration the intense political and business cooperation of the ex-members of the colleges) many applicants are likely to desire to get admitted mainly to benefit from the significant social capital which the membership can bring with it.

As for the social awareness and responsibility, it is important to clarify that this doesn't mean any direct involvement into politics. However, it is not a rarity that leading politicians, even active prime ministers visit the colleges where the students on the one hand can get direct answers for any questions they're interested of, on the other hand they can get used to have personal contacts with key personalities of the country, which can be a potentially useful experience for the future, as for members of the future elites.

The financing of the colleges is regularly realized from two main sources. On the one hand, many colleges which belong officially and administratively to a university (even if there is the possibility for students of other universities to be admitted) the university covers a large percentage of the expenses of the college. Another regular source is the fundraising, which

means on the one hand regular application for various funds with a specific purpose (for example, organizing summer camps and open-universities or publishing scientific volumes) and on the other hand intense convincing of various wealthy persons or institutions to donate for the college. At this point becomes very obvious the importance of how former members succeed, as the more successful they are the more funds can be achieved this way. This can lead to a polarization of the colleges, we believe, from financial point of view, as the best ones from the capital city can get more and more well-off while the “second-line” of the colleges is likely to find it very difficult to keep up with the others.

Legal status and formal regulations

As for the regulation, we find a two-level system of regulation. It is important to mention at this point, that since the early '90s, when there's been a real expansion of the colleges many newly founded institutions openly challenged the approach according to which the model of the Rajk college is the only suitable one or the only way through which an institution can obtain the right to identify and denominate itself as college for advanced studies. For more than two decades it was quite difficult to find out for the researchers but also for ordinary people, which college in what measure follows the model of the Rajk institution. The solution has been invented in the form of an accreditation process which evaluates any applying institution and decides whether it may identify itself as a college for advanced studies. The basic document which sets the principles and requirements any college should follow and fulfill is the Charter of the Colleges of Advanced Studies.

However, the denomination of the institutions is not the only purpose of the accreditation. The colleges have made successful lobby in order to get special funds from the government which can be accessed exclusively by the colleges through competition. The great stake of the status of college is the right to apply for these funds. The lobby activity has also managed

to import the principles and requirements to a higher level, as they became integral parts of the act on higher education in Hungary. At the chapter of the talent care, there are specified the criteria of being a college for advanced studies (XIV-32).¹¹ The success of the lobby is likely to be the result of the excellent political relationships which the colleges have (as a result of the fact that the whole system-changing democratic new generation was formed around members of the colleges) but also reflects on the general efficiency of the institutional and informal communication of the colleges.

Based on the Charter¹² and the act for the higher education, the main characteristics of the colleges for advanced studies are:

- a wide range of autonomy in the terms of academic, cultural and community-based activities and the right to establish its own procedure of admission and to decide about the candidates who apply for admission;
- existing cohabitation of the students (if the common accommodation is not available, there must be evidences shown that have been efforts made for it);
- accepting as main values the high-level academic achievements, the community-based way of functioning and social awareness and responsibility.

The social functions of the colleges

As we have shown above, the main purpose of the Hungarian colleges of advanced studies is to give all the possible support for the members of the colleges to achieve excellent academic performances and to become future elites with an increased level of social responsibility. However, there's been since the beginning a clandestine dispute over this issue. The real question was and is still in the present whether these institutions help students who are in shortage of any resources or the members are mostly children of upper-middle and upper class families who are likely to become future elites without any support. Such criticism tried to focus on the fact that these colleges are not proper

means for the promotion of the social mobility but can contribute to a certain polarization of the society as the members (Lukacs-Nagy, 2004) with relatively high social background create an effective way to gather around them similar students and to strengthen their positions in the society's elite circles. Of course, this criticism doesn't mean that there is any exclusion of the applicants with different social background, it rather suggests that the values and cultural codes used and appreciated during the admission process favor those who come from a specific type of social ambient, similar to the members' social background. This is similar to Pierre Bourdieu's theories which focus on the linguistic and behavioral style through which the elite can reproduce itself (Bourdieu, 1991) by offering advantages to those who do possess such linguistic and behavioral style and attitude.

Although all these criticisms haven't been directly addressed to the colleges, in a clandestine way it has always been on the agenda, especially from those side who believed that as the colleges which follow the model of the Rajk college and which are structured and managed on the principles of the Charter don't contribute to the social mobility and to the integration and inclusion of marginal groups.

It is worth to know that the social inequalities are significant in Hungary¹³ and the most vulnerable social groups are the members of the Roma community. As it is typical for several minority groups which are disadvantaged in the same time (Ogbu-Gibson, 1991) they are not only underrepresented in the employment but also in the higher education while it is obvious that education could be the most efficient way of reducing in the long term the disadvantages of this community.

The Roma colleges as potential channels of the social mobility

We suppose that one main reason why the Roma community as a whole was not able to organize itself and to have a representative role in the country's political and social life was

the lack of the elites. More precisely, similarly to several Eastern-European countries there are various, usually "self-proclaimed" rulers, leaders of the community, which often confront each other publicly but none of them can prove any kind of real support from its community. As for the traditional politics, in Hungary various parties have Roma representatives but the activity of these tends to reflect more the parties' positions rather than the needs of the Roma community.¹⁴

The number of Roma colleges for advanced studies increased at a high pace during the last years. As for the self-definition, these colleges (often affiliated with various churches) define themselves as institutions which try to offer chance for the Roma students to achieve remarkable results in the field of studies. The church-supported colleges emphasize in their self-presentation the importance of the religious values, while the secular colleges tend to adopt the principal of the "classical" colleges in the terms of social responsibility, but with an emphasis on the human rights, the importance of social integration and the relevance of anti-exclusion policies.

Qualitative research among the members of the Roma colleges for higher education

We concluded a qualitative research under the form of semi-structured interviews asking nine members of three different Roma colleges, the Jesuits' Roma College for Advanced Studies, the Evangelists' Roma College for Advanced Studies and the Christian Roma College for Advanced Studies. We interviewed 4 students from each, reaching to a number of 12 respondents. The gender share was balanced, as we interviewed 6 male and 6 female students. All of them studied in the frame of different degree programs.

We formulated four research questions.

We were curious to find out, *which are the ways through which the colleges support the Roma students during their studies and how*

efficient are they considered by the students themselves?

We tried to learn from the interviews *what the reactions of the original social environment of the students was on the fact that they became higher-education students and members of the colleges also.*

We were also curious to know *whether the students see the possibility that these colleges could provide leaders of the Roma community.*

Last, but not least we wanted to know *which are the most common discussion topics among the students at informal occasions? We wanted to know, which are the social challenges which they consider important and in which measure they share their views on it within the community.*

The presentation of the results

The interviewed members have mentioned several methods through which they are helped and supported from the colleges' side throughout their studies. The most typical answers given to us were related to educational support under the form that the college finances private teachers and tutors for the members who have difficulties in facing exams or any other challenge for which they don't feel being enough prepared for. A typical answer has been the following: *"All of us had various lacks in knowledge brought with us from the high school, without the tutors it is likely that the exams would have been immense challenges for us"* (P.K., 21 years old).

An other important aspect of the support was the acquisition of various special books and instruments. The costs being fully covered by the colleges this means an important financial relief for the members of the colleges. Other students admitted, that the special scholarship offered by the college in return for the remarkable achievements during the university studies is a heavily motivating factor.

As for the reactions of the home environment, the students answered unanimously that their families and communities were largely supportive and rather proud that their sons and daughter conduct university studies. However,

some also added that *"there was also a kind of fear among the members of my family, they were not sure whether financially they could allow such a luxury as keeping me studying at a university, not only because of the tuition fee but due to other complementary costs"* (M.A., 19 years). Not surprisingly, they evaluate the financial aid of the college as vitally important for creating the possibility of facing such financial obstacles.

The interviewed students revealed that they don't believe that in the short term the colleges would be able to provide new leaders which would be largely acknowledged by the Hungarian Roma community. They explained it on the one hand with the ethnical and cultural heterogeneity of the Roma community (which has however not created conflicts or problems of any kind so far since they've been members of the college). On the other hand they mentioned, that the students are more eager to get a degree at the university and to prove to their community and themselves that they are able to perform if the proper conditions are assured and the political ambitions, even if there are, are not exposed.

They also added, that *"the fact that we have a handful of tutors from various fields of sciences who spend much time with us and participate to informal discussion has broadened our base of knowledge about the society that surrounds us"* (B.C., 20 years). They hope, that if there will ever be some legitimate leaders of the Roma community able to represent the Romas' interests on national forums, he/she will also possess the same sort of sociological knowledge which they managed to gain during their membership in the college.

As for the most common discussion topics, we received two main groups of answers. One common topic seems to be the social exclusion and its every-day manifestation. This usually comes into discussion as they notice that in their future fields of work how underrepresented the Romas are. A medicine student, as a future doctor said that *"even African doctors or Asian nurses are more usual in the Hungarian health*

system than staff with Roma origin. I don't know what I can expect when it comes to treat ethnic Hungarians and how I will react if there would be any sort of comment on my ethnical background. We have no colleagues who could prepare us for such experiences which are likely to happen anyway" (Z.B., 22 years).

Another important topic is the situation of the Roma youth and in this concept the phenomena of the criminality among Roma. As the term "Roma-crimes"¹⁵ came into public discussion in the country¹⁶ the Roma students of the college first rejected any such discussion as being racist and prejudicial, but they say, that this view is changing. As a student described the situation: *"Even if we hate the term and we find it provocative and offensive, we need to understand why this concept became widely accepted in Hungary, in such a measure that the party which promotes it became according to some researches the second largest political party. If we want to combat this narrative we need to face the fact that among some sorts of crimes the Roma convicted for these are largely overrepresented" (S.L., 19 years).*

Some may agree, some not about the existence of the "Roma crimes", but it is a common topic as it turns out from the answers. The main challenge is according to a student is to convince a large number of the Roma children as minors that the only way towards a social inclusion is education and by no means any sort of crime. They consider for example, that *"the colleges demonstrate, that even if our chances are far from being equals with the Hungarians, there are some lucky ones like myself which can benefit from real help and support. So the chance definitely does exist" (D.I., 20 years).*

Final conclusions and thoughts about the possibility of implementing Roma colleges in Romania

We evaluated the "social experiment" of Roma colleges as an innovative structural effort to assure protected channels of social mobility

for the Roma in Hungary. As we checked the website of the colleges and as we analyzed the answers of the questioned students we have the impression that these colleges try a special combination of the performance-led principles of the classical colleges with a strong social attitude as their primary purpose is – unlike the classical colleges – not to prepare the best students of various institutions for internationally acknowledged scientific careers but to offer permanent supporting attitude for the Roma youth to obtain university degrees. With other words, they have a rather complementary profile, meaning that while for the middle-class or above situated Hungarians sending their children to university is quiet natural, the Roma don't even have clearly identifiable higher social classes, so the aim to encourage the Roma community to have a group of young intellectuals is something that is currently not possible in the case of the Roma community in Hungary. As we cannot discuss about elite training in the frame of the higher education while there are hardly any Roma at the universities compared to their ratio in the population, it will be the secret of the future whether these Roma colleges will change their focus on elite training rather than contribution to the formation of primary intellectual groups among the Roma, what they are doing currently.

What the Roma colleges do, seems to be efficient and effective. Even if the answers of the persons asked in the frame of our research permit us drawing reserved conclusions, the applied methods of the colleges and their contribution to help facing the Roma students with their usual challenges seems to be vital.

As for the possibilities of implementing such colleges in Romania, we believe that the opinion according to which the education is the only real and lasting solution for the integration of socially excluded groups should be taken seriously in the Romanian public policy-making too. However, there are some factors which raise questions about the possibility of the implementation of identical institutions.

Unlike in Hungary, where the colleges of advances studies are largely connected to their

role in the democratic transition, they are both well-known and likely to be appreciated by a significant share of the society, in Romania the term is almost completely unknown. The foreign colleges, the British and French institutions could ring the bells for some intellectuals, but it is very unlikely that it would be so clear what their purpose is that disadvantaged groups could have faith in them.

Another difference is that the tradition of the colleges of advanced studies is more than a century old, which has given the chance for all the social agents involved in any kind of activity related to the colleges to evaluate these sorts of institutions and to do the necessary corrections, or suggestions at least. We don't think only about general considerations related to the talent care and specifically to these sort of institutions but we believe that the countries and societies are diverse and the values, attitudes vary. So the finding of the "Hungarian model" was a long-term project, which is still being continued today. The founders of the Roma colleges have already had significant amount of experience and cumulated knowledge on the colleges of advanced studies set up for the Hungarian society's needs. As we tried to demonstrate, they didn't have to start inventing a new concept, they could rely on the existing structures, they only had to adjust many elements to the special needs of the Roma community, and this was an important advantage.

Even if we can find Europe-wide examples for the transmission of the best-practices, it would necessarily take some time to find the Romanian model of the colleges and to adjust its way of functioning to the local peculiarities of both the Romanian society and within that for the Roma community of Romania.

We believe, despite all these mentioned

Notes

¹ We personally reject this idea, as we have no reliable data to know whether there have been any criteria related to the talent in the admission processes of the middle ages' institutions. Even more, as the

difficulties, it is an important aspect that both countries are members of the European Union, where (even if not so specifically mentioned in official levels) not only labour-force, capital, goods and services, but also ideas and best practices flow freely, without borders and restrictions. The issue of the Roma is not only the issue of Romania, but involves several states of the EU, and through the demographical effects of the Roma migration we can hardly find any regions in Europe which are not affected by the social exclusion, and as a consequence, existential challenges of the native or settled down Roma communities. If a region is underdeveloped, there's a fair chance that there are domestic Roma, if a region is highly-developed, purely due to this economic status becomes a possible migration destination.

As a final conclusion, the mid-term and long-term success of the Roma colleges in Hungary is not a Hungary's particular issue or internal subject. If they fail, a promising way of social inclusion will fail. But if they succeed to achieve remarkable results in the creation of Roma intellectual groups, it will be a good-practice which has fair chances to spread across Europe and to become, among other ideas, an important element of a plausible and efficient strategy for combating this issue on European level. In this case, not only because the geographical proximity, but also due to the existence of large domestic Roma communities, Romania could benefit consistently. More than that, hopefully through the discovering of the "Romanian-way of talent care among Roma people" as an added value it could encourage other EU-states or candidates to implement these practices and to struggle to find their own way of adjusting the common experiences gathered either on community level or inside any member state.

historians have revealed many details of the feudalistic circumstances of the period we find it likely that attending university was rather a feudalistic and as thus an inherited privilege, than anything else.

² The new political group, the communists were extremely suspicious towards all the other political

and intellectual spheres of the society. They not only confronted the former conservative political elite of the country (consequently and repeatedly being labeled as purely “fascist” by the communists) but they also were rather suspicious towards other (democratic) center-left political movements, especially social-democrats. As these main political ideologies were the most popular ideological flows among the middle and upper-class groups of the society, the communist elite, willing to train a future elite which is reliable and likely to stay loyal to the party could not recruit the members from the middle and upper spheres of the society of that era.

³ The key personalities of the initiative being Dr. Szabo Kalman, rector at the time and teaching assistant Attila Chikan, who is still the president of the college.

⁴ In Hungary there has been implemented a rather unique form of the state-socialism which deserves a short explanation. After the uprising in 1956 against the Soviets the following communist regime with Janos Kadar in front offered the society a relatively large level of freedom in personal issues, entrepreneurship, academic and cultural activities. That was by no means comparable with the democratic tendencies, but within the socialist countries this was rather special. Thus was Hungary often labeled as being the “happiest barrack” within the communist influential area in Eastern-Central Europe.

⁵ Harmincöt éves a Rajk László Szakkollégium (2000-2004), Rajk László Szakkollégium, Budapest, 2005, p.17.

⁶ Laszlo Rajk being an ex-member of the communist party and an influential political figure, convicted for murder on invented and false accuses in the most criminalized era of the communist regime in Hungary. Later, as a victim, he became a symbolic figure demonstrating of the brutality and illegality of the Rakosi-period (early '50s).

⁷ Janos Kornai, who later became full professor at the Harvard University and whose volumes offered one of the most comprehensive criticism of the state-controlled economic system has been a regular guest lecturer in the college. Further reading in Janos, Kornai. *A gondola erejével. Új Mandátum*, Budapest, 2005.

⁸ Of course, this was not an unanimous opinion, it

also led to a separation of some members who founded another College with a more radical left-ideological attitude (College for Socio-theoretical sciences).

⁹ The most remarkable youth-oriented party, which has ever since become three times governing party of the country (FIDESZ-ALLIANCE OF YOUNG DEMOCRATS) has been founded in the building of the Bibo College and its leader, later prime minister Viktor Orban has been widely remembered as being a leading member of the College. So the whole generation of the party is widely labeled in the specialized scientific literature as “Bibo-collegists”.

¹⁰ It is worth to mention, that unlike the formerly mentioned Eotvos College and the NEKOSZ these kinds of colleges (with the Rajk Laszlo College as the first and model-giving institutions) have not seen themselves as institutions which implement social aspects in their procedures of recruitment. They have not seen as primary purpose the education of the young students from lower social spheres but training institutions of the absolute elite. However, this approach doesn't mean that they don't serve even today as important enforcing institutions of the social mobility. Social aspects appear in the form of the support for the members, as we will later describe them. Important is to note, however, that the admission process to these colleges is rather complex and the competition for a place in the best institutions is quite intense. So, accepting Coleman's theory of cultural transmission from generation to generation, we believe that it is a plausible hypothesis that among the members of the colleges the majority comes from upper-middle class families. This challenge has been remediated through the invention of slightly different forms of colleges.

¹¹ The Act on Higher Education in Hungary. http://net.jogtar.hu/jr/gen/hjegy_doc.cgi?docid=A1100204. TV. Accessed on February 18, 2014.

¹² The Charter can be accessed at the following website: <http://www.szakkoli.hu/>. Accessed on August 19, 2014.

¹³ In a territorial aspect too, as there are several regions which demonstrate to have far worse socio-economical indicators than the countries average, let alone the European average or the country's most developed regions, especially the central region, including the capital city, Budapest.

¹⁴ The most important political achievement related to Hungarian Roma political actors has been achieved not on domestic but on communitarian level as the Hungarian Member of the European Parliament Jaroka Livia filled in the proposal for the European Roma Strategy which has been adopted by the European Parliament. See more at http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-13-1226_en.htm. Accessed on August 9, 2014.

¹⁵ <http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702303949704579459031888499824>. Accessed on September 7, 2014.

¹⁶ The largest contributing factor was the slogan of a far-right party, the Jobbik, declaring itself ready to protect the country from the widespread Roma-criminality.

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