

Prof. Ivan BERNIK

Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

*Does Post-Socialism Make People Happy?**

Abstract

Social scientists dealing with intimate life contemporary economically advanced societies agree that this social sphere is undergoing deep transformations, but there is little agreement on the dynamics and course of change. Drawing on recent theoretical research in the field (see Z. Bauman, A. Giddnes, G. Schmidt, J. Weeks), the paper will try to substantiate a thesis that the intimate life is characterized by a double transformation. On the one hand the social organization of intimate life is increasingly separated from the other social spheres (eg. religion and politics) and on the other hand its transformation has been marked by the long-term trends of individualism, rationalization and value generalization, i. e. by the trends to which other social spheres have also been exposed to. It will be argued that these social forces have influenced the change of intimate life for decades, but in the last decade the social and cultural consequences of this change have become more visible and therefore more often discussed by social scientists.

The thesis that the change of social organization of intimate life is more evolutionary than revolutionary will be substantiated by the results of surveys, especially by a survey results conducted recently in Slovenia (I. Klavs), examining social values governing human behavior in the sphere of intimate life.

1 Psychological Well-Being and Its Social Correlates

It often seems that feelings of (un)happiness are socially highly undetermined and idiosyncratic and therefore they cannot be a subject of social scientific re-

* The paper is printed as submitted.

search. This view has been exposed to criticism already in Durkheim's study of social causes and consequences of division of labour. Rejecting the utilitarian view that driving force behind the social change resulting in societal complexity is innate human desire for happiness, Durkheim claims that happiness should be treated as dependent social variable, i. e. that both human desire for happiness and the level of experienced happiness are basically socially conditioned. In addition to that he also claims that happiness – although it is experienced individually – is a collective feeling: „If members of a given society are set in similar life circumstances and are exposed to the influence of the same physical and social environment, they necessarily share a certain way of life and also certain experience of happiness.” (Durkheim 1972/1893/, 255). Therefore, it can be expected that intensity of experienced happiness varies across societies and also across different social milieus in particular societies. However, in all societies and in different groups in a given society the basic conditions of happiness are the same. High level of happiness is a characteristics of societies or social milieus where there exists a „sufficient congruence” between the scope and intensity of human needs and the means necessary to meet them. Assuming that human needs and expectations are socially much more malleable than the availability of resources, Durkheim argues that societies steer the human quest for happiness and influence the level of experienced happiness by regulating both the scope and intensity of human needs and thus ensuring their congruence with the available means.

Durkheim's account of societal determinants of happiness suggests counter-intuitively that not their affluence but societies' abilities to put limits on human expectations largely predict the differences in level of happiness across societies. According to his analyses, traditional societies characterised by low division of labour are in the rule much more efficient in performing this regulative function than complex societies. That leads him to the conclusion that the level of happiness in undifferentiated societies is generally higher than in complex ones. In the complex societies „we neither know the limits of our legitimate needs, nor we understand the purpose of our endeavours” (Durkheim²⁰⁰³ /1897/, 49) and we experience – despite opulent resources – a pronounced incongruence between our expectations and the possibilities to fulfil them. This conclusion also indicates that both types of societies do not differ only in the intensity of happiness but also in the social mechanisms generating (un)happiness. Whereas in traditional societies the feelings of (un)happiness are related primarily to the success (or failure) of the efforts to produce the means to meet socially strictly limited expectations, in complex societies

they are defined by the fact that the availability of means, no matter how efficiently they are produced, cannot match the escalation of expectations. At the intra-societal level marked differences between traditional and complex societies can also be assumed. Whereas in societies, where human expectations are highly limited, differences in social status – due to the fact that stable expectations are status or stratum specific – are not in any significant way related to differences in the levels of happiness, the absence of effective regulation of expectations in complex societies generates „egalitarisation” of expectations which leads to the strong feelings of relative deprivation among lower social strata. This also implies that those belonging to lower social strata are less happy than those belonging to higher strata.

Although these ideas have not been often quoted in recent research of human happiness, it can be argued that Durkheim has anticipated key research concerns in the field. Among these concerns is probably the most intriguing the question – which is the focal point of Durkheim’s analysis – about the relationship between social change, epitomised by growing societal complexity, and happiness. As indicated, Durkheim has derived from his theory of social change a set of hypotheses which are aimed at explaining differences both in the levels happiness across societies characterised by different level of complexity and in milieu-specific levels of happiness in individual societies. Most of contemporary research follows Durkheim as far as the key research questions are concerned, but it largely disregards his theoretical ambitions. This is related to the fact that current research of happiness is largely motivated by policy concerns, i. e. by measuring correlation between the level of economic and social well-fare on one side and the level of happiness it tries to assess effects of certain policies and to produce information basis for future policies (see Antončič, Boh 1991).¹

The neglect of Durkheim’s ideas in current research of happiness can be justified by the fact that the survey data falsify his key claim that in modern

¹ The level of happiness or psychological well-being, sometimes also termed subjective well-being, is conventionally measured as self-reported intensity of feelings of happiness or of general life satisfaction (see Veenhoven 1995, 17; Bradburn 1969, 9). For the purpose of this article the notions of happiness, psychological well-being and subjective well-being will be seen as synonymous. Life satisfaction and happiness will be treated as similar but nevertheless different concepts; the former „gives a more cognitive-driven evaluation of living conditions and life as a whole”, whereas the latter „gives a more emotional assessment” (Keck and Delhay 2004, 64).

societies the level of happiness is generally lower than in less complex societies. Contrary to his prediction, the surveys show „that the people in the less advantaged countries recognise that they are deprived, worry much more about managing the demands of everyday living, and, in general, are much less likely to have a sense of satisfaction with life or see their life as a happy one” (Inkeles 1993, 8). In addition to that, the correlation between material conditions of life and happiness is stronger in poorer than in rich societies (states) and that improvements in material conditions are strongly related to the increase of happiness in economically less advanced states than in the advanced ones (Veenhoven 1995, 29). The data also provide a thin support for Durkheim’s explanation of intrasocietal differences in level of happiness in complex societies. Whereas Durkheim hypothesises that social inequalities will be clearly reflected in levels of happiness, the survey data show that differences in social status explain little variation in complex societies. At the same time they indicate that level of happiness is strongly related to the (self-assessed) quality of intimate ties, physical health and feeling of control over one’s environment (see Veenhoven 1995, 32-34; Inkeles 1993, 12-13). It is also worth noting that the surveys do not confirm a popular notion that levels of happiness in some Western states (e. g. Anglo-Saxon ones) are systematically higher than in some other states (e. g. Mediterranean ones). Considering their different levels of economic development, the differences in the level of happiness in these states are not significant.

Nevertheless, when Durkheim’s ideas are placed in a historical context it seems possible „to reconcile” his hypotheses on variations in happiness and the current research findings. When taking into account the rapid spread of similar or even uniform cultural standards, aspirations and expectations across the globe in the last decades (see Cohen and Kennedy, 2000: 26-28; Sztompka 1994, 92-95), unimaginable in Durkheim’s times, his claim that congruence of human expectations and resources to meet them is a basic precondition for happiness gets a new meaning. It can be assumed that globalisation of human expectations has decisively contributed to the homogenisation of human expectations and that incongruence of needs and available means is nowadays smaller in economically more advanced than in less advanced states. This implies that majority of inhabitants in economically worse-off states are not only materially deprived, but are also exposed – to use Durkheim’s term – to „moral poverty”, one aspect of moral poverty being low level of happiness. In this perspective, Durkheim’s explanation of inter-societal differences in levels of happiness can (still) be useful in explaining recent comparative survey data.

The same holds true also for Durkheim's explanation of intra-societal differences in happiness. There seems to be two general reasons why the relationship between social inequalities and level of happiness is weaker in economically advanced states than in backwarded ones. The first reason can be attributed to the fact that most of societies have also undergone the process of internal homogenisation of expectations, i. e. the strata-specific expectations are almost non-existent in both types of societies. It is to expect that feelings of relative deprivation – and also of unhappiness – are more pronounced in poor than affluent societies. The second reason is the emergence of post-materialist values in economically advanced societies. This value orientation has led to gradual decline in the importance of material resources in generating life satisfaction and happiness. As the postmaterialist values are more widespread among higher social strata, it can be assumed that in economically advanced societies two different societal sources of (un)happiness are at work – the incongruity of expectations related to economic well-fare and expectations related to quality of life and the means to meet them. The research findings on trends in happiness indicate that the emergence of post-materialist values has not led to the increase of inequalities in level of happiness across social strata, but rather to their reduction. At the same time the research shows that in economically backward societies the level of happiness is strongly related to the level of material well-being, whereas in the advanced societies to gender equality, respect for human rights and political freedoms and access to knowledge and information (see Veenhoven 1995, 29).

The macrosociological view of determinants of happiness which can be derived from Durkheim's ideas will be used in this paper as a theoretical background for the analysis of some aspects of happiness in post-socialist societies. Our analysis will be led by the assumption, that post-socialist societies (still) belong to the societies in which level of happiness is strongly related to the material well-being. According to this hypothesis, it can be expected that post-socialist states differ in the levels of happiness and that these differences are generally congruent with the differences in the level of economic development. At the same time, it can be also assumed that in post-socialist states the level of happiness is generally lower than in most „old-European” states.

2 Levels of Happiness in Post-Socialist States: Some Facts and preliminary Explanations

The paper draws on results of three surveys conducted in the time span of 2000 to 2003. The selected data comparable only within certain limitations

(see Table 1). The first limitation is related to the fact that the data presented in the first and third column do not apply to happiness but to life satisfaction. Although these two measures of psychological well-being are not identical, surveys which used both items have established that „the correlations between satisfaction and happiness are surprisingly high” (Keck and Delhay 2004, 65). On this basis, we can treat the data on life satisfaction and happiness not only as comparable, but as highly similar. The second limitation to comparability lies in the fact that the data on happiness presented in the second column in Table 1 were obtained by using an eleven-point scale and data in the third column by a ten-point scale.

(2970)

Table 1: Life satisfaction, happiness, BDP and HDI across states

	Life satisfaction*	Happiness**	Life satisfaction***	Happiness****
Austria	–	7.58	7.8	7.9
Bulgaria	3.37	–	4.4	5.9
Czech R.	5.43	6.75	6.5	7.2
Estonia	4.83	–	5.9	6.8
<i>Greece</i>	5.57	6.50	6.8	7.6
Hungary	4.72	6.32	5.9	7.1
<i>Italy</i>	–	6.46	7.2	7.5
Poland	5.17	6.43	6.2	6.9
Portugal	–	6.84	6.0	6.8
Romania	3.77	–	6.2	7.2
Slovakia	4.79	–	5.7	6.5
Slovenia	5.65	6.93	7.0	7.4
W. Germany	5.93	7.16****	7.2****	7.6****
E. Germany	5.28	7.16****	7.2****	7.6****

* Mean value of responses to: „Please tell me how satisfied are you, all in all, with your life in general? Please answer by using the following scale, in which 0 means totally dissatisfied and 10 means totally satisfied.”. (Source: „Value Systems of the Citizens and socio-economic Conditions – Challenges from Democratisation for the EU-Enlargement” conducted in 2000 and 2002; see <http://www.kulsoz.euw-ffo.de/EU%20Projekt/EUwelcome.html>).

** Mean value of responses to: „Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?”. The item was measured on an 11 point scale, where 0 meant extremely unhappy and 10 extremely happy. (Source: European Social Survey, conducted in 2002; see http://naticent02.uuhost.uk.uu.net/archive/tech_report/3_que_2.doc).

-
- *** Mean value of responses to: „All things considered, how satisfied would you say you are with your life these days? Scale from one ‘very dissatisfied’ to 10 ‘very satisfied’”. (Source: European Social Survey, conducted in 2002; see http://naticent02.uuhost.uk.uu.net/archive/tech_report/3_que_2.doc).
- **** Mean value of responses to: „Taking all things together on a scale of one to 10, how happy would you say you are? Here one means very unhappy and 10 means very happy.”. (Source: Quality of Life in Europe. First European Quality of Life Survey 2003. See <http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/files/EF04105EN.pdf>
- ***** *Only the first survey was conducted separately in West and East Germany.*

Despite the limitations, the data reveal some patterns, which are relevant from the point of view of our hypothesis. In general, there is a high level of congruence of data from different surveys. This can be best illustrated by the fact that among states, selectively included in Table 1, Austria is „best-placed” according to all available data and Bulgaria is the „worse” one. The data also indicate that the level of happiness and/or life satisfaction is higher in the „Old-European” states than in post-socialist states, but economically less advanced „Old-European” states (Portugal, Greece) are according to some surveys placed behind economically most advanced post-socialist countries (Slovenia, Czech Republic). The data also show that the level of happiness and life-satisfaction is generally higher among economically more advanced post-socialist states than among less advanced ones. The leading dyad consists of Slovenia and Czech Republic and the lagging-behind dyad of Bulgaria and Slovakia, whereas Romania deviates most clearly from the rule. According to two of the three surveys, Romania is placed much higher than one may predict on the basis of its economic development.

Data presented in Table 1 generally speak in favour of the conclusion, proposed by authors of the Quality of Life in Europe survey, that both in the level of happiness and life-satisfaction „there is a strong east-west divide between the EU 15 and the NMS/CC 3 (new EU member states and three membership candidates, I. B.), where people from the former socialist countries in particular tend to be less satisfied” (Keck and Delhay 2004, 70). Nevertheless, the data in Table 1 indicate that the dividing line between the West and post-socialist states is not always as clear as suggested by the quoted claim. In addition to that, there are also marked differences across post-socialist states, which roughly follow the differences in the level of economic well-being.

A comparison of data presented in Table 1 with the data from a survey conducted in 1991/92 by S. Manson and collaborators (data not presented in a table) shows that relative positions of post-socialist states in regard to the level

of psychological well-being have not changed substantially in a period of one decade (Manson 1995, 54). In Manson's study the highest level of life-satisfaction was found in East Germany, which was followed by Slovenia, (then) Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, Russia, Estonia and Bulgaria (Romania was not included in the survey). When disregarding the case of East Germany and the fact that there are no separate data for the Czech and Slovak part of Czechoslovakia, the findings of Manson's study do not differ significantly from findings presented in Table 1. It seems that the high placement of East Germany can be attributed to the immediate beneficial effects of German reunification on life-satisfaction of inhabitants of the new federal states. Nevertheless, the data in Table 1 suggest that beneficial effects of reunification have been short-lived and that Czech and Slovaks (then still living in a common state) differed also in the level psychological well-being.

Mason's analysis provides also some support for the thesis that (post-)socialist societies have been characterised by a strong link between material and psychological well-being. When asked about their perception of injustices the socialist regime inflicted on them, the respondents „stated 'lack of money' as a source of injustice far more often than any other category, including political and religious beliefs” (Mason 1995, 55-56). On this basis, it can be argued that both support and rejection of the socialist regime were motivated primarily by economic considerations. Precisely, the socialist regime was losing mass support not because the majority of population did see its oppressive character as increasingly problematic but because of its increasingly unsatisfactory economic performance.² It can be assumed that the importance of material well-being in assessing (also) one's psychological well-being has been „transmitted” from socialist to post-socialist societies.

Nevertheless, the intriguing question, whether the system transformation has lead to any significant change in psychological well-being cannot be answered due to lack of systematic comparative data. Not only Mason's study but also other data showing strong correlation between the level of material and psychological well-being in post-socialist states suggest that the effect of transition on psychological well-being has been probably rather insignificant, or

² This means that only relatively small part of population opposed the socialist regime because of its oppressive nature. But although small in numbers, these groups possessed necessary resources for an active rejection of the regime and for steering effectively the course of transformation. That is why the demise of socialist regimes – at least in Central Europe – has been often referred to as „revolutions of intellectuals” (see Ash 1990).

precisely, it has been significant only as far as was the transformation has lead to change in material well-being. Therefore, it is to expect that in most post-socialist states the psychological well-being was on decline not only in the decade prior to collapse of socialist regimes but also immediately after their collapse and has been on slight increase after the economic recovery in new democracies. If the post-socialist states will be able to ensure sustainable economic growth, the link between material and psychological well-being will be gradually less strong and non-economic factors will become more prominent in determining the level of psychological well-being.

3 Trends in Psychological Well-Being and Some Social Correlates of Psychological Well-Being in Slovenia

Data collected in Slovenia in the last two decades make possible to assess the empirical relevance of our claims about trends in psychological well-being in post-socialist states. If we assume that in post-socialist societies trends in this field are similar, the Slovenian case can be treated as specific case of a general pattern.

Our analysis will be based on data from twelve measurements of psychological well-being in Slovenia in the period from 1981 to 2005. In all of the selected cases, the same research instrument was used. Unfortunately, only one survey containing the well-being item was conducted before the regime transformation and there were also no such items included in surveys which were conducted immediately after the regime transformation. This limits significantly the empirical basis of our analysis.

Following the general idea that in post-socialist societies psychological well-being has been strongly correlated with material well-being, we may expect that also in Slovenia changes in psychological well-being have followed the oscillations in material well-being. As in the beginning of the eighties Slovenia (then a part of Yugoslavia) was already confronted by first signs of economic crisis and political instability, we can expect that the level of life satisfaction and happiness was at that time already comparatively low. It seems reasonable to hypothesise that in the next fifteen years the same factors contributed to the further decline of psychological well-being in Slovenia or at least to its stagnation at a rather low level. First signs of an upward trend can be expected in the middle of the nineties. There are good grounds to believe that steady eco-

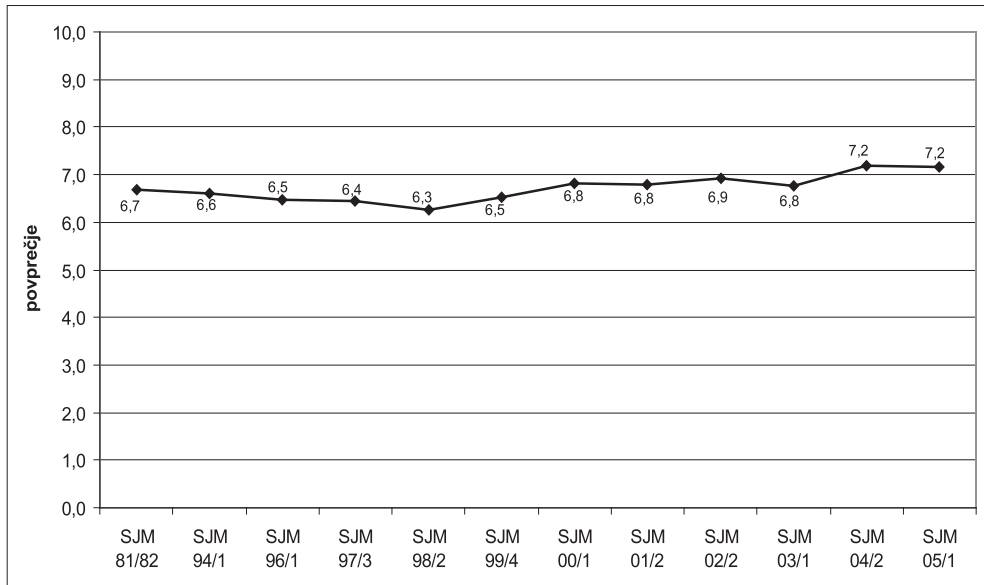


Figure 1: Psychological Well-Being in Slovenia from 1981 to 2005*

- * Mean value of responses to: „Some people are more satisfied and happy with their lives than others. We would like to know, how you would place yourself on this scale in regard to your feelings of satisfaction and happiness or dissatisfaction and unhappiness.“. The item was measured on an 11 point scale, where 0 meant extremely unhappy and 10 extremely happy

conomic growth coupled with political stability has finally led to uninterrupted increase in psychological well-being at the turn of the century.

Data presented in Figure 1 do mostly not confirm these conjectures. Only the results of the last seven surveys (1989-2005) speak in favour of the claim that steady economic growth and political stability in Slovenia has been accompanied by gradual but consistent increase of average psychological well-being. But the data from the previous period (1994-1998) do not indicate the expected congruence between economic and political conditions and the average level of psychological well-being. Contrary to our expectations, its level was the lowest in 1998 and not in the middle of the nineties. It should also be noted that in the beginning of the eighties the average level of psychological well-being was almost the same as at the end of the nineties. This comparison indicates that in Slovenia the average level of human happiness has been surprisingly stable across rather long period of time characterised by profound social change. It also indicates that the dynamics of psychological well-being

cannot be explained only by referring to the quantity of available goods to meet human needs but should also take into account the dynamics of human expectations.

When taking the mediating role of socially induced expectations into account, the stability in the level of psychological well-being in Slovenia can be hypothetically ascribed primarily to the flexibility of human expectations. It seems that social transformations in Slovenia have not been linked neither too dramatic rise of human expectations nor to widespread fatalism. From this point of view it can be argued that psychological well-being was probably quite resistant to change in material well-being because the gradual economic decline was accompanied by similar decline in human expectations, but at the same time the economic decline was not deep and protracted enough to wither away people's hopes for recovery. It also seems that the level of psychological well-being has been set in slow upward motion only after the majority of citizens has been convinced that economic recovery will not be disrupted.

Although the validity of these claims may be disputed, they seem valuable because they indicate that the relation between material and psychological well-being cannot be explained without taking account the dynamic of human expectations. This mediation role of the prevailing expectations has been neglected in many contemporary accounts of trends in human happiness but has been aptly stressed in Durkheim's analysis of social determinants of human happiness.

The dynamics of psychological well being in Slovenia can be complemented by an analysis of some social correlates of psychological well-being. The data presented in Table 2 show that the level of happiness has been in all relevant sets of data strongly related to self-assessed health condition of respondents and self-perceived social status (in all surveys but the last one), whereas the relation between education and level of happiness has been statistically significant only at some occasions.

These results are generally congruent with the findings based on surveys conducted in western societies. According to these surveys, the psychological well-being is systematically related to one's health condition, quality of intimate ties and some aspects of social status (see Veenhoven 1995, 33). It should be also noted that both in Slovenia and in the West these variables explain a rather small share of variance in psychological well-being.

Table 2: Some Social Correlates of Psychological Well-Being in Slovenia

Year/Survey	F	Sign.	R ²	Independent variables	Beta	Sign.
SJM 81/82	49,433	0,000	0,090	Gender	-0,018	0,396
				Age	0,006	0,785
				Level of education	0,115	0,000
				Health*	-0,256	0,000
SJM 94/1	37,322	0,000	0,131	Gender	0,087	0,004
				Age	-0,069	0,032
				Level of education	0,097	0,002
				Health	-0,296	0,000
SJM 96/1	35,172	0,000	0,131	Gender	-0,035	0,256
				Age	-0,115	0,000
				Level of education	0,095	0,007
				Social status**	0,252	0,000
SJM 97/3	31,015	0,000	0,118	Gender	0,027	0,386
				Age	-0,117	0,000
				Level of education	0,107	0,003
				Social status	0,230	0,000
SJM 98/2	26,043	0,000	0,098	Gender	0,034	0,266
				Age	-0,032	0,313
				Level of education	0,153	0,000
				Social status	0,203	0,000
SJM 99/4	30,003	0,000	0,114	Age	-0,189	0,000
				Social status	0,231	0,000
				Level of education	0,017	0,639
				Gender	0,076	0,015
SJM 00/1	34,365	0,000	0,118	Gender	0,015	0,000
				Age	-0,177	0,600
				Social status	0,174	0,000
				Level of education	0,110	0,000
SJM 01/2	31,702	0,000	0,108	Gender	0,069	0,019
				Age	-0,171	0,000
				Social status	0,191	0,000
				Level of education	0,077	0,025
SJM 02/2	66,083	0,000	0,150	Gender	0,046	0,058
				Age	-0,057	0,032
				Level of education	0,131	0,000
				Health	-0,305	0,000
SJM 03/1	42,650	0,000	0,172	Gender	0,015	0,595
				Age	-0,027	0,415
				Level of education	0,108	0,001
				Social status	0,151	0,000
				Health	-0,265	0,000

Year/Survey	F	Sign.	R ²	Independent variables	Beta	Sign.
SJM 04/2	54,109	0,000	0,135	Gender	0,036	0,154
				Age	-0,145	0,000
				Level of education	0,084	0,001
				Health	-0,244	0,000
SJM 05/1	78,576	0,000	0,290	Gender	-0,025	0,363
				Age	-0,494	0,000
				Level of education	-0,084	0,008
				Social status	0,055	0,076
				Health	-0,092	0,005

* Question: How would you assess your current health condition? Excellent, very good, good, bad, very bad, do not know.

** Question: To which social group – stratum or class – do you belong? To the lowest stratum or class, working stratum or class, middle, upper-middle or upper stratum or class?

4 Conclusion: Facts and Speculations about Trends in Psychological Well-Being in Post-Socialist Societies

As already indicated, the data presented in this paper are not systematic and complex enough to enable us to get an insight into trends in psychological well-being in post-socialist societies. Nevertheless, these data are valuable because they represent a solid empirical basis for hypotheses regarding psychological well-being in post-socialist societies, thus indicating possibilities for future research. Given the fact that (also) in post-socialist societies psychological well-being is strongly related to material well-being, it is to expect that in those post-socialist societies, which are and will be characterised by steady growth of material well-being of the majority of population, there will also a gradual growth of psychological well-being. Granted that in affluent societies the contribution of material well-being to psychological well-being is rather small and that non-material factors are getting more prominent, it can be expected that the gap in psychological well-being between the West European and post-socialist states will progressively decline. These may be the main lines of future research, but it seems that analytically most promising would be studying of cases which deviate from the general patterns of change in psychological well-being. The „deviant” cases can reveal much better than the general patterns the social forces which condition the stability or change in psychological well-being.

This has been to some extent illustrated by the Slovenian survey data on psychological well-being. From our point of view, the most important „message”

of these data is, that – at least on the short run – the dynamic of psychological well-being has its own logic which does not correspond to the logic of change in material well-being. In more general terms, the Slovenian data suggest that sociology cannot limit itself to the study of correlation between material and psychological well-being, but it should look at the social facts which are causally related to the psychological well-being. It seems that this research may still benefit a lot from Durkheim's idea of social determinants of human happiness.

REFERENCES

- Albers, J. et al (2004): Quality of Life in Europe. First European Quality of Life Survey 2003. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities: Luxembourg (<http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/files/EF04105EN.pdf>)
- Antončič, V., B. Katja (1991): Premise za raziskovanje kvalitete življenja. Družbolsovne razprave 8, 12, str. 5-18.
- Ash, T. G. (1990): We the People: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague. Cambridge: Granata Books.
- Bradburn, N. M. (1969): The Structure of Psychological Well-Being. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.
- Cohen, R. and Kennedy, P. (2000): Global Sociology. Macmillan: Houndmills.
- Durkheim, E. (1972): O podeli društvenog rada. Beograd: Prosveta.
- Durkheim, E. (2003): Suicide (Selection). V: Emirbayer, M., ed. (2003): Emile Durkheim. Sociologist of Modernity. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 32-49.
- Inkeles, A. (1993): „Industrialization, Modernization and the Quality of Life”. International Journal of Comparative Sociology, 34, 1-2: 1-23.
- Keck, W. and Delhay, J. (2004): „Subjective Well-Being”. In: Albers, J. et al: Quality of Life in Europe. First European Quality of Life Survey 2003. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities: Luxembourg (<http://www.eurofound.eu.int/publications/files/EF04105EN.pdf>), pp. 63-70.
- Mason, D. S. (1995): „Justice, Socialism, and Participation in the Postcommunist States”. In: Kluegel, J. R., Mason, D. S., Wegener, B., eds.: Social Justice and Political Change: Public Opinion in Capitalist and Post Communist States. de Gruyter, Berlin, New York.
- Sztompka, P. (1994): The Sociology of Social Change. Oxford: Blackwells.
- Toš, N., ed. (1999): Vrednote v prehodu II. Slovensko javno mnenje 1990-1998. Ljubljana: CJMMK.
- Toš, N., ed. (2004): Vrednote v prehodu II. Slovensko javno mnenje 1999-2004. Ljubljana: CJMMK.
- Veenhoven, R. (1995): The Study of Life Satisfaction. In: Saris E. W. et al (ed.): A Comparative Study of Satisfaction with Life in Europe. Budapest: Eötvös University Press, pp. 11-48.