

LADANCSIK, TIBOR

tabor.ladancsik@gmail.com
sociology researcher (Subotica, Serbia)

Hungarian – Serbian mixed marriages in Vojvodina



Abstract This article is about marriages between Hungarian and Serbian peoples in Vojvodina. In this case we speak about marriages between people with different religion, language, nationality and cultural identity. The research was made in Vojvodina. I used demographic data, and interviews with 11 people. I made the interviews in St. Moravica, a town mostly inhabited by Hungarians. The result shows, that a Hungarian woman more likely gets a mixed marriage, than a Hungarian man. The article searches for the reasons of this phenomenon, and analyses the primary characteristics of mixed marriages. Another important question was, why some of them who live in mixed marriages assimilate, while the others manage to live in two cultures side by side.

Keywords mixed marriage, interview, national identity, assimilation, endogamy, exogamy

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Mixed marriage

A marriage is endogamous, when the spouses origins from the same social stratum, the same area, or the same nation. In this case we can speak about endogamy, when two Serbian or two Hungarian get married. We can speak about exogamy, when two people with different nationality get married, in this case a Hungarian and a Serbian.

Exogamy can make a stronger bound between nations. When the members of a group or a nation often get married with each other, then the bounds of two groups will be stronger. A mixed marriage is an alliance not just between two people, but two families. By marriage the members of both families can make contact, they get acquainted with each other's culture, habits. It's not everywhere the case, the research shows some contradictories. The interviews show that some of the spouses are not in contact with the relatives of their husbands/wives. There is a case when all contact is lost with one spouse's affinitive. In this case there is no contact between families or nations.

In the mixed marriages the national differences break surface. The spouses can be tolerant but the differences will outcrop. A relationship cannot exist without a common language. The best case scenario is, when both spouses speak each other's language. But this case often does not last. And even when it is the case, there is always a dominant language in the family. For the common language one of the spouses already did the first step and learned his or her partner's language. If his or her partner also learned the other language, then their relationship is in "balance", both of the languages are used in everyday life. If the communication happens in one language, then this is the first step to assimilation. The birth of a child can dissolve or make stronger this system. If the parents speak with the child in both languages, than the balance will be stronger, or be restored (if the system was unbalanced). But if the communication with the child happens only in one language, the one that is not used will be definitely overshadowed, and the child will never learn this language. The phrase mother tongue in this situation can be misleading, because in the most cases it's not the mother's language that will be dominant for the child. In the case of a Hungarian mother and a Serbian father, mostly the Serbian language gets to be the child's mother tongue (MIRNICS 1994). This can happen even then, when the mother speaks her language better, as the father speaks his (ex. the mother is a teacher the father is a factory worker).

A mixed marriage can be a form of social mobility. If somebody lives as a minority, and chooses a partner from the major nation that can be interpreted as upward mobility (HoóZ 2002). If a woman has high education, than she usually want a partner on the same or even higher education level (SEAGALEN 1982). I hypothesize, that in mixed marriages there will be more couple with a Hungarian wife and a Serbian husband, than a Serbian wife and a Hungarian husband, and in that phenomenon the upward mobility plays an important role.

It is an important question that mixed marriages can or cannot bring reconciliation between nations. Sadly there are only bad examples for that question. In the Yugoslavian civil war the most atrocious and bloody fights and genocide happened in that territory where the most mixed marriages were. In that territory according to the 1981 census the children's 25-40% were born in mixed marriages- those children were soldiers 10 years later during the war (HoóZ 2002). Hopefully, this kind of conflict will never happen again, and that is only an isolated example, but it shows that mixed marriages cannot bring peace between nations. What is more, the identity crisis of the children who were born in mixed marriages, perpetuate the possibility of a conflict.

A short historical review

In the Carpathian Basin different nations had been living together ever since. In the Hungarian Kingdom, from the very beginning lived Germans, Slavs and Romanians together. Even nowadays it is typical for the Carpathian Basin, that in an area where the majority nation lives, we can find settlements where the minority is in absolute majority. Moravica is such a village, where the Hungarians are in absolute majority. This phenomenon can be observed while reading the interviews.

For the nations who live in the Carpathian Basin, it was always important to keep their nationality, religion and language. If this didn't happen, the Carpathian Basin would be ethnically homogenous. But how those differences affect the partners choice, were there any ethnically mixed marriages in the Hungarian Kingdom. In those days the marriages motivated by love were not widespread. The rulers and the nobles choose their spouses according to their political interests, and the peasantry choose according to the size of the land and the assets. In these circumstances, were there any mixed marriages? The data hints that there were none. János Scitovszky wrote this in 1845: "Here the Hungarians live in peace and love with the Germans and Serbians, and the Protestants live in peace with the Catholics... The people of Baranya help their neighbour with pleasure. If somebody is building a house the whole village helps him. But there are no marriages between people who talk different languages." (SCITOVSZKY 1845) This implicates that in the nineteenth century in Baranya were no mixed marriages. Most likely this was the case in the whole Hungarian Kingdom.

After the First World War the situation has changed. In Hungary the minority often contracts mixed marriages except the gypsies. These marriages are not just between Hungarians and minorities but between minorities and minorities. (TÓTH – VÉKÁS 2008) The reasons for the high mixed marriage rate are the low population of the minority and the fact they live in diaspora, not settled in one place.

There were big changes in the mixed marriages rate of the Hungarian minority after the First World War. The Hungarians became the constitutional nation of the country. In the early days there were few mixed marriages, but in the passage of time the rate increased.

| Year | Hungarian | Slovakian |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| | nationality of the spouse | |
| 1931-1933 | 9,4 | 3,8 |
| 1951-1953 | 16,3 | 4,7 |
| 1961-1963 | 20,1 | 6,7 |
| 1971-1973 | 23,9 | 6,7 |
| 1981-1983 | 25,9 | 6,2 |
| 1988-1990 | 27,9 | 6,6 |

The rate of the mixed marriages in Slovakia by nationality (percentages) (Hoóz 2002)

As it shows, mixed marriages in Czechoslovakia increased very fast. Between the first and the last examined period the rate of mixed marriages are three times more in the Hungarian minority, but this increase is much less in the Slovak population.

The situation in Yugoslavia was very similar. After 1945 the mixed marriages were forced by the dictatorship. The propaganda said that the mixed marriages only have good sides, and the leaders of the minorities were forced to get into mixed marriages. If somebody wanted to climb on the social ladder he has to cooperate: get a mixed marriage, say that his nationality is Yugoslavian or send his children into a Serbian language school. Because of these, the rate of the mixed marriages increased rapidly. In 1990 the 25-30% of all marriages were mixed marriages (MIRNICS 1994).

| Year | Serbian | | Hungarian | |
|------|---------|------|-----------|------|
| | husband | wife | husband | wife |
| 1953 | 6,8 | 6,2 | 18 | 22,5 |
| 1961 | 10,3 | 15,7 | 19,9 | 25,8 |
| 1970 | 9,2 | 9,3 | 27,2 | 28,7 |
| 1971 | 9,4 | 9,5 | 26,7 | 29,1 |

The rate man and woman who get mixed marriages by nationality in Yugoslavia (percentages) (Hoóz 2002)

It is clear, that even in the socialism Hungarian woman get mixed marriages more often than the Hungarian man. Like in Czechoslovakia the Hungarians get mixed marriages more often than the majority nation, and the number of the mixed marriages increased by the progress of time. It is important to examine the mixed marriage rate of other nations in Yugoslavia.

The data of the 1990 census shows that the mixed marriages rate was not high, but by the Hungarians it reaches 25%, (1 700 Hungarian – Hungarian marriage and 400 Hungarian – Serbian mixed marriage). Correlated to the other nations this proportion is very high: by the Montenegrins 2 100 regular marriages and 400 Montenegrin – Serbian mixed marriage, By the Muslims nationality¹ 2 100 regular marriage and 100 Muslim – Serbian mixed marriage, by the Gypsies there are technically no mixed marriages (SEBŐK 2003). The Hungarians rate of mixed marriages is higher than the others nationalities of Yugoslavia. This phenomenon can be explained with the fact that the other nationalities (Slovenes, Montenegrins) have their own republic within Yugoslavia, where they were the majority, so they had no interest of getting mixed marriages. If a member of a minority chooses a member of the majority as his spouse, in all likelihood it will bring him bigger prestige, than a spouse from a minority. For example a Slovenian cannot get higher prestige (or upward mobility) by marrying a Serbian, because the Slovenian nationality is also a majority. The Hungarians were in neither Yugoslavian republic in majority, so if a Hungarian chooses a Serbian for partner it could mean upward mobility, because the Serbians are not a minority (unlike the Hungarians). This could be an important motive of the high mixed marriage rate of the Hungarians. It could be interesting to examine how many mixed marriages and how many homogenous marriages were in 2013.

¹ In Serbia, unlike the standard in Europa, a nation can be defined by religion.

| | Serbia | | | | | | | |
|--|--------|-----------------|----------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------|--------|
| | Total | Northern region | | | Southern region | | | Kosovo |
| | | Total | Belgrade | Vojvodina | Total | Sumadia and West-Serbia | South- and East-Serbia | |
| Marriages - Total | 36 209 | 19207 | 9408 | 9799 | 17002 | 9679 | 7323 | ... |
| The spouses have the same nationality | 32 875 | 16844 | 8822 | 8022 | 16031 | 9060 | 6971 | ... |
| The spouses have different nationalities | 3 334 | 2363 | 586 | 1777 | 971 | 619 | 352 | ... |

Marriages by nationalities in 2013

The most mixed marriages were in Vojvodina in total 1777. This is not strange because this is where most of the minorities live in the country. Without Kosovo in 2013, 9% of the total marriages were mixed marriages in Serbia. In Vojvodina that rate is 18% which is the double of the Serbian rate.

The rate of the mixed marriages

If we want to know anything for sure about mixed marriages, we first must observe the number of the mixed marriages in the last years. The following tables show how many mixed marriages were between 2000 and 2013 in Serbia, by genders.

| | | Serb - bride | | | Serb - groom |
|------|-------------------|--------------|------|-------------------|--------------|
| 2000 | Hungarian - groom | 215 | 2000 | Hungarian - bride | 310 |
| 2001 | | 221 | 2001 | | 343 |
| 2002 | | 232 | 2002 | | 347 |
| 2003 | | 254 | 2003 | | 327 |
| 2004 | | 217 | 2004 | | 345 |
| 2005 | | 223 | 2005 | | 293 |
| 2006 | | 209 | 2006 | | 301 |
| 2007 | | 192 | 2007 | | 324 |
| 2008 | | 193 | 2008 | | 275 |
| 2009 | | 208 | 2009 | | 263 |
| 2010 | | 184 | 2010 | | 228 |
| 2011 | | 177 | 2011 | | 245 |
| 2012 | | 156 | 2012 | | 228 |
| 2013 | 184 | 2013 | 254 | | |

Mixed marriages by nationalities (RZS 2014)

The tables show that each year there were more mixed marriages where the groom was Serbian, than where the groom is Hungarian. The hypothesis which says the Hungarian women get more mixed marriages than the Hungarian men was true. There are two more questions. The first comes out of the showed data, since it shows that the number of the mixed marriages is decreasing both in case of men and woman. This can be explained by the decreasing enthusiasm towards the mixed marriages or the decrease of the number of marriages in general. The second question: is Hungarian women actually motivated by upward mobility or not. Let's examine the first question first. If the decreased number of the mixed marriages comes from the decreasing enthusiasm towards the mixed marriages than we have to examine the total marriage rate in Serbia. If there is no decrease in that number, then we know that the cause is the decreasing enthusiasm. The crude marriage rate in Serbia is decreasing since the middle eighties (RZS 2014). We can see that the cause is not the decreasing enthusiasm towards the mixed marriages but the decrease the number in marriages in general.

Now we can examine the second question which says that the Hungarian women are motivated by the upward mobility in marriages with the Serbs. To get into details we must get familiar with the data of the Serbian census. If we look at the Hungarian women with children then out of 65 986 marriages only in 53 830 cases were the nationality of the child Hungarian, nevertheless the husbands were Hungarians in 54 158 cases. We can see that even in cases when the family was homogenous (both parents were Hungarians), there were cases when the children became Serbians. In the case of 8 349 mixed marriages the children's and the father's nationality were the same: in 4 648 cases Serbian, in 287 cases Montenegrin, in 1 630 cases Croatian and in 722 cases Yugoslavian. Only in 875 mixed marriages were the mother's and the children's nationality the same (MIRNICS 1995). We can see that the women who live in mixed marriages tend to give up on the idea their children became Hungarians, and in order to keep good relationships they choose majority nation as their children's nationality. Based on this we can conclude that the Hungarian women are truly motivated by the upward mobility in mixed marriages, if not for themselves than for their children. If we examine the rate of the divorces we can find interesting data. In 1981 in 9 023 broken families where the Hungarian mother was raising alone her children, in 7 688 cases both the mother's and the children's nationalities were the same (both Hungarians). In 1 753 broken families, where the Hungarian father was raising his children alone, in 1 636 cases their nationalities was the same (MIRNICS 1995). The chances for children getting her mother's nationality were less even in cases of divorce.

Local mixed marriages

The following chapter is about the Hungarian – Serbian mixed marriages in Moravica. The village where 6 000 people live is mostly habited by Hungarians (90%). Therefore the Serbian spouses are usually not residents, but come from other villages for various reasons. In total there were 11 interviews made with resident peoples who live in mixed marriages. In the interviews we used Hungarian language except in cases where one of the spouses couldn't speak Hungarian. In that case we used Serbian. Because of the length of the article I do not want to describe all the interviews, only the ones implicating elementary conclusions.

The first subject

The first subject is a woman born in 1961. Her parents are both Hungarians; in the family there were no other mixed marriages. She is a dentist; in the interview she was blithesome and vigorous. She met her husband in 1982 and got married two years later in 1984. Her husband is a TV mechanic and that is the reason why they've met. When the subject's grandmother's TV got broken she helped her bring it to the mechanic, and that is how they met. There are a lot of mixed marriages in her friends circle. They have a good relationship with most of the relatives, because most of them are the same age. Between each other they speak Hungarian and Serbian. She said that they use mixed languages. "When a friend of ours from Hungary visits us, he can't understand us because we speak a mixed language. Usually half of the sentence is in Hungarian the other half is in Serbian. My husband also speaks Hungarian perfectly, so we do not notice how we speak between each other." They have two children a boy and a girl. In the primary school and in the high school they both learned in Hungarian, but on university they learn in Serbian. The first subject and the children declare themselves Yugoslavian, the husband declares himself Serbian. So the marriage of the first subject is not only mixed by nationality. The subject is an intellectual because she is a dentist, and her husband is a skilled labour. The family could have a Hungarian cultural identity because the first subject has greater knowledge in the Hungarian culture and language, than the skilled worker husband has in the Serbian language and culture. But in the family we see the opposite. The Serbian identity gets over the Hungarian. The subject and the children said that they are Yugoslavians, although in the case of the first subject this is groundless, because both of her parents are Hungarians. And even the husband did not do so he said he is Serbian not Yugoslavian. The pair chooses their habitation bilocally because both of their families live near. The family is big on both-sides and they hold intercourses with everybody. It turns out that the first subject thinks the cultural and lingual differences the biggest problem, those are the ground for the confrontations. But she thinks that there could be problems if she would not live in a mixed marriage too. She thinks marriage is not easy but every marriage has its own problems. All in all with, even with the problems she is happy that she lives in a mixed marriage. Their marriage is stable despite the national differences.

The second subject

The second subject is a woman born in 1962. Her father is a Bosnian Serb and her mother origins from a Russian – Ruthenian mixed marriage from Zakarpattia Oblast. The second subject says that she is Serbian but she speaks Hungarian perfectly without any accent. Her husband is Hungarian, born in 1955 and they get married in 1980. The second subject is an insurer and her husband is pensioner, he was before an engine driver in the local mill. They have two children: a girl born in 1981 and a boy born in 1987. The second subject went to school in Hungarian language, and she has sent her children also to a Hungarian school. She speaks with her husband in Hungarian, but with her children and grandchildren they also speak in Serbian, because they think that they must learn that language too. About nationality she told that: "I calling myself Serbian, because I cannot say that I am Hungarian, because I am not Hungarian. It is true that I speak Hungarian perfectly but I am not a Hungarian. I was born here I played with Hungarian children when I was a child, I have Hungarian friends with whom I hold intercourses, my children are Hungarian, my husband is a Hungarian, but I cannot say that because my husband is a Hungarian, that I am a Hungarian too. This is the truth I cannot say anything else." We can see that the second subject, at the time of the census declared herself Serbian but she doesn't have

a solid national identity. Her mother origins from a Russian – Ruthenian mixed marriage and her father is a Serbian from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Neither of her parents have Vojvodinian origin so she cannot even have a territorial identity. In her original family they speak in Serbian, but she went to a Hungarian school and her friends were Hungarians too. She would like to be a Hungarian, but it would be a lie if she called herself Hungarian, because she does not have a Hungarian origin. Even the religion could not clarify her self-identification, because her original family was mixed in religion too. Her mother was evangelical and her father was orthodox, those religions have very few followers in the settlement. Maybe the urge for self-identification took part in all that, that she now lives in a mixed marriage. In the subject's new family the Hungarian identity is dominant. The subject's family has passed away, but she holds intercourses with her husband's family. During the interview she often said that "she came to a good family". She speaks with her husband in Hungarian, but with their children she speaks in Serbian too. In her new family she found the identity she couldn't find in her original family. She likes her job, because it provides her independence. She complained that she had to live in poverty when she was a child, and her parents could not help her when she was a young adult. She does not blame her parents for her childhood poverty, at the time of the interview she spoke positively about her parents. In her current family she thinks that she is more dominant because in her life she always had to fight her own battles, and because her husband is now retired. That implicates that she led her family toward the Hungarian identity, because she did not want to live in the same identity crises, like in her original family. She is very happy in her current family and they never had a nationality problem.

The fourth subject

The fourth subject is a woman born in 1957 and she is an accountant. She lives with her husband who was born in 1952 and now he is a pensioner. The subject is tired of her job because the constant raise of the retiring age made her lose all her hope to get her pension. They both are very helpful, the whole interview happened in good mood. At the time of the interview they spoke about a lot of problems, but despite that they seemed to be bouncing peoples. The subject's husband cannot speak Hungarian, but he mostly can understand what he hears in Hungarian. There are a lot of mixed marriages among their friends. They hold intercourses with all of their relatives, there are no grudges with anybody. In their case after the wedding the husband moved to his wife's place. They married in 1977, they have two daughters. The first was born in 1977 and the second in 1984. They both married to a men origin from mixed marriages. Between each other they speak in Serbian. The subject sometime uses Hungarian, but with the children they speak in both languages. The subject is Catholic, her husband is Orthodox but he says he is a communist so they are not quiet religious. But they commemorate both the orthodox and the catholic holidays. They have two TVs so they do not watch television together and they solved the language differences in this way. In their TV watching habits we can observe some gender differences. The husband watches sports on TV in any language, which the subject doesn't like. Their children went to Hungarian school but the subject would like better if they go to a Serbian school because she thinks that in that way her children could have a better emergence, but there is no Serbian school in the village. But the older daughter went to a Serbian university.

Nationality is an important question to them. In past they all declare themselves Yugoslavian, but today they act different. The husband said: „Back then when Yugoslavia existed we all declare ourselves Yugoslavian. I didn't want to say that I am Serbian I said I am Yugoslavian.

Since there is no Yugoslavia I declare myself Serbian.” And the subject said: “He is Serbian, I am Hungarian, I will not deny it. Because there is no Yugoslavia, we can’t do much about that.” This implicates the husband’s communist ideology. In the case of mixed marriages the Serbian spouse rarely declares himself Yugoslavian, we can see that from the interviews. He declared himself Yugoslavian because of his ideology. When they started to speak about the destruction of Yugoslavia their mood become darker. They mourned the destruction of their country which they liked. We can see a strong communist influence in their circle of friend, in their family, in their religion and in their national identity. Among their friends the mixed marriages are very frequent, which is an important component of the Yugoslav ideology. They took the “brotherhood – unity” motto very seriously in their family and in their everyday life. Their attitude toward the religious holidays also shows a communistic ideology: they do not go to the church but they celebrate the holidays. And in their national identity they have problems only since the dissolution of Yugoslavia. They think their marriage is good. They think the good marriage is not founded on nationality or religion, a good marriage needs good peoples first.

The sixth subject

The sixth subject is a Hungarian woman, born in 1943. She is a pensioner and before that she was an economic technician. She and her husband got married in 1969. The subject was born in Moravica, but her husband came from Sokolac. She and her husband worked at the local cooperative. She was an economic technician and her husband was an architect technician. They met there. At first the subject lived at her husband’s place but later they moved to Moravica because it was easier for them to go to work from here. Among their friends there are only a few mixed marriages. They have a good relationship with all their relatives but lots of them past away already. They have two daughters. They went to a Hungarian elementary- and a Serbian High school. The first daughter went to a Serbian university, the second currently works abroad. Between each other they speak in Serbian because the sixth subject’s husband cannot speak Hungarian. But with the children they speak in both languages. “I have 4 grandchildren and they know both languages. They usually prefer Serbian because they live or had been living in an area mostly populated by Serbians, but they understand Hungarian and they can even speak in that language more or less.” The sixth subject is Hungarian and her husband is a Serbian. Before the children declared themselves Yugoslavians, but nowadays they do not speak about nationality. In the family the Serbian identity dominates. The subject said that they never had any problems with nationality. From that we can conclude that the nationality never was an important question in the family. The subject probably had a fair knowledge of Serbian before she met her husband because without that they would not be able to communicate. Her husband was probably not inclined to learn Hungarian, and the subject did not constrain that. Her husband kept his Serbian circle of friends and the subject kept her Hungarian circle of friends. With the mutual friends of the family the communication was probably in Serbian, because the husband cannot speak Hungarian. This could affect the socialisation of the children that could later become the basis of their stronger Serbian identity. Because in their marriage they did not pay much attention to national identity in general, the family had been naturally pushed towards the Serbian identity (because the effects of the mostly Serbian environment). The subject is pleased with her marriage she thinks that the tolerance is important. They make the decisions together, she thinks that this is the basis of a good marriage.

The seventh subject

The seventh subject is a Hungarian woman born in 1976. Her husband originates from a mixed marriage and he declares himself Yugoslavian. They got married in 1999. The seventh subject is a shop assistant and her husband is a manager in horticulture. There are a lot of mixed marriages among their friends. They speak with all of the relatives. They speak mostly Hungarian between each other, what the subject regrets because she thinks that learning Serbian language is important for their children. Their children went to a Hungarian school. They work hard and make decisions together: "My grandfather said that newer brawl with each other, always one of you will be right in the house anyway, and that's a good marriage. And he was right, only one of the spouses should spar at the time."

In the family clearly the Hungarian identity dominates. Because the husband's original family was already mixed so he had no clear national identity. For the husband the national identity was not important, and he did not use Serbian language a lot in the family. Because they use Serbian infrequently, the Serbian identity is weaker. We can see this phenomenon in the previous interview with a slight difference, where the Serbian identity was supreme and here the Hungarian was pushed aside.

The eleventh subject

The eleventh subject is a Hungarian woman born in 1951. She and her husband married in 1973 and divorced in 1979. At that time the eleventh subject was a salesclerk, now she is a pensioner and her husband was an engineer in demesne lands. She does not hold intercourse with her ex-husband since the divorce. There were mixed marriages among the friends of the eleventh subject but not among her husband's friends. They have held intercourses with all of their relatives. Among themselves they were speaking only Serbian and they have watched only Serbian programmes on TV. In those days religion was important for them but today it is an important part of the subject's identity.

In her marriage her father-in-law was dominant which later led to problems. "In my marriage sadly my father-in-law was dominant and three peoples cannot live in a marriage. My husband resisted, wanted to resist, we didn't want our marriage to go to only one direction, the Serbian direction. In Serbian culture there is a strong patriarchal system, and my father-in-law, although we did not live in the same village, demanded to keep that principle which says that the man is a man and the woman is inferior. That was very stressful especially for my husband and he tried to solve this conflict... not with me but with his father... with alcohol. He was never drunk but he used it to calm himself. We did not have children because of that. I did not want just to give birth to a child and then to raise it, because that is what they wanted. The things did not work out... so I asked for a divorce, and I divorced"

In their marriage both participants had a strong national identity, but the subject's father-in-law wanted the marriage to go into the Serbian identity. That resulted in an unstable situation, which caused serious problems in the life of the couple. The subject did not want to forego her national identity and her husband couldn't manage this. This situation eventually caused a divorce. If the national identity of one of the spouses is forced to the other, the other side can feel endangered. And this situation can easily lead to a divorce.

Balance in the family

We can observe from the interviews that a marriage will be solid if the two national identities are in balance. If for both spouses their national identity is equally important, then both cultures will be represented in the marriage. The children will know both languages, and they will have a chance to create a solid national identity. But if for one of the spouses it is not important to preserve his or her identity, than the other identity will be dominant unwillingly. Forcing one of the identities can also result instability because it can create resistance on the other side. The balance can be maintained if both of the spouses preserve his/her own identity and neither of them tries to force his/her own identity to the other. The value of ones identity is influenced by many factors: circumstances in life, influence of the family, learned norms and social impacts. A good social policy can help to develop the balance in the family. If it can make both of the national identities an eligible alternative, it can stop the assimilation and mixed marriages can be a place for the intercommunication of cultures.

Summary

Mixed marriages have an important role in the social structure. Mixed marriages can form the aspect of the society but the society also can strongly affect the mixed marriages. This is a neutral phenomenon; it does not bring any positive or negative effects. But the acts of the state can make positive or negative effects to it. It is very important that the state politics do not force mixed marriages like the Yugoslavian government did in the fifties, but also do not forbid them. The Hungarian and the Serbian languages must be treated equally and not hold one of them in a subaltern status. For children who origin from mixed marriages must have the possible to go to school on the language which they would like, otherwise the official state language can easily come over the minority language. The conflicts of the past must be solved and not buried deeply because later it can re-surface even stronger. If the alternative for one of the nations is more attractive than it will lead to assimilation of the other nation, and if one nation disappears than it will cause pain mostly to that territory and to those who live there. The demographic data show that the Hungarian women get more into mixed marriages than the Hungarian men. Because they can easily abandon their nationality than men and the state politics will support the assimilation even if it remains neutral towards the issue. In Europe there are some good examples of minority policies. The model is given, we only have to adopt it. If in the family the spouses do not care for their national identity then the weaker identity (minority) will be inferior to the stronger (majority) one because of the milieu around them, the stronger identity will be dominant. The interviews show the model that we have seen in the demographic data. In the interviews the Hungarian women live in mixed marriages more often than the Hungarian men. But we can also see that a good mixed marriage is not just a dream, two cultures can coexist in a way that neither of them subjugates the other.

The marriages could affect the function of a state. If the marriages are stable that could result the stability of the society. The same is true for the mixed marriages, if they are stable then they could be a solid base of the state.

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