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Cosmopolitans in a farmhouse:
Return migration and the adaptation of habitus
through the lens of a homemaking process

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'It is as if the place tied and restrained the one who leaves'.¹
(Andrea Tompa, *Haza [Home]*, p. 156)

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to offer a specific perspective on the interrelation and complexity of the spatial and social mobility trajectory and its multi-layered effects on habitus. This family case study is based on two semi-structured family history interviews. Its protagonist is a return migrant who is deeply embedded in the periphery (*tanyavilág*) of a Hungarian rural town. After spending almost fifteen years in the UK, she moved back to this relatively marginalised micro-place and bought an old farmhouse. The interpretation of her periodical migration trajectory focuses on the process of change in habitus and interprets the question of the 'emotional cost' of migration through the interrelation of spatial and social mobility. This perspective emphasises the spatial aspects of how mobility can dynamize the practical and emotional aspects of dislocation and belonging, while offering an insight into the adaptation of habitus. It is primarily examined through a homemaking process, which reveals the reconciliation of different place-based, family-inherited, and newly developed (migration-related) dispositions. This Bourdieusian interpretation shows that this home is a materialised reality as well as a symbol of social and spatial position. This harmonious 'sense of (social) place' (Hillier & Rocksby, 2002) can be grasped in terms of taste and lifestyle, revealing that 'freedom of choice' is the lived meaning of this intergenerational social mobility trajectory, which was fuelled by transnational migration.

Keywords: migration; social and spatial mobility; adaptation of habitus; homemaking; sense of (social) place; marginalised place

1 Introduction

Growing scholarly interest in (social) mobility is inextricably bound up with the wider social context: namely, how mobility paths have been influenced by the circumstances of late capitalism, which has been modifying forms of wage work (see for example Standing, 2011;

¹ Translation by the author.

Kovai, 2019; Kovai & Vigvári, 2020; Melegh et al., 2018; Szombati, 2018). The worldwide restructuring of mobility chances is interrelated with changes in living strategies, of which an increasing number are based on different kinds of spatial mobilities framed by global migration (see for example de Haas, 2010; Parreñas, 2001; Durst, 2018; Melegh et al., 2018; Toma & Fosztó, 2018; Váradi et al., 2017; Váradi, 2019). Complex and ambivalent effects of these global changes in migration patterns have become visible in Hungary and the CEE region in variable and ‘fluid’ forms (de Haas, 2010) of spatial mobilities. Transnational employment-based mobilities that are either long or short term, formal or informal appear in forms of commuting, as well as in circular, periodical, or long-term transnational migration (Durst, 2018; Durst & Nyíró, 2018a; Toma & Fosztó, 2018; Melegh et al., 2018; Váradi et al., 2017; Váradi, 2018). All these spatial mobility (and living) strategies have complex effects on social mobility aspirations and trajectories, and vice versa. These interrelated mobilities can change over time, partly due to their ‘fluidity’, which stems from changing structural constraints and economic periods, and is partly due to the fact that they are interrelated with changes in family life (de Haas, 2010; Durst, 2018; Kovai & Vigvári, 2020; Melegh et al., 2018; Váradi, 2018).

These spatial-mobility-based living strategies require significant effort from individuals and families; a wide range of costs can arise even if the aim of transnational mobility/migration is not necessarily social advancement or social mobility, but the maintaining of one’s current social status. Not only are these more or less ‘constrained choices’ strongly affected by emotions (Durst & Nyíró, 2018a; 2018b; Melegh et al., 2018; Parreñas, 2001; Váradi et al., 2017; Váradi, 2018), but there can also be ‘emotional costs’ to social mobility that may accompany spatial mobility/migration. The loosening of social ties and resulting social isolation can lead to lasting personal crises, while adaptation to a new social milieu can require significant effort from individuals (Bourdieu, 2000; 2002; Bereményi & Durst, 2021; Durst & Nyíró, 2018b; Durst & Nyíró, 2021; Naudet, 2018).

This paper is an attempt to offer a specific perspective on the interrelation and complexity of spatial and social mobility and their multi-layered effects on habitus. The protagonist of this family case-study is a woman deeply embedded in the periphery (*tanyavilág*) of a rural Hungarian town. She migrated to London periodically while also buying and renovating an old farmhouse in this relatively marginalised micro-place where her ancestors once lived. The interpretation of her recurring (and eventually returning) mobility trajectory illustrates the importance of spatial dimensions in social mobility. Drawing on the Bourdieusian notion of habitus, I scrutinise how different lived places shaped this woman’s habitus. Habitus conceptualised as an ‘(embodied) social space’ (Hillier & Rocksby, 2002, pp. 4–5) provides insight into the complexity of the adaptation of habitus by revealing how different dispositions and everyday practices related to different places can be reconciled. The range of this spatial mobility trajectory as well as its return character shed light on how spatial and emotional dimensions of mobility are intertwined through dislocation and homemaking² and how a harmonious ‘sense of (social) place’ can be materialised through a homemaking process.

² This paper’s theoretical framework is primarily sociological. Dislocation and homemaking, however, can be related to loss of place, place attachment, and place making. For these notions of environmental psychology which this paper does not treat, see for example Düll, 2015.

2 Theoretical framework

Habitus is a relatively stable system of dispositions; it is a ‘structuring’ and a ‘structured’ structure, which is in dialectic relationship with objective structures. It is both a mode of operation and the (constantly changing) result of this mode of operation. Habitus is a specific way of being and seeing things as it predetermines specific modes of perception, thinking, and action. Although its mode of operation has a strong tendency to reproduce pre-existing social structures through social action, it is still not entirely fixed and deterministic. In fact, it is a ‘practical systemacy’ (Bourdieu, 2002, p. 28): ‘a combination of constancy and variation, flexibility and rigidity’ (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 160). Generated practices are never based on mere repetition, thus habitus always allows the possibility of unexpected reactions and individual improvisation (Bourdieu, 2000; 2002; 2009[2000]).

Nevertheless, it presupposes a strong ‘coincidence’ between social position and predispositions. This ‘homology is never perfect’ (Bourdieu, 2000, pp. 147, 157); however, different ‘misfits’ (Bourdieu 2002, p. 18) can occur. Although habitus can change within its limits, abrupt structural changes can make it dysfunctional (Bourdieu, 2000; 2002). Social or spatial mobility (dislocation) can also subvert ‘the never perfect’ homology between social position and dispositions, and cause temporary or enduring ‘misfits’ between objective and formerly interiorised structures.³ Stable and significant misfits can lead to dysfunctional (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 162), destabilised habitus (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 160), which may imply a specific ‘sense of place’ – among others, a ‘habitus of disbelonging’ (Gale cited by Hillier & Rocksby, 2002, p. 10) or ‘habitus dislocation’ (Lehmann cited by Naudet, 2018, p. 9).

Parreñas (2001) described the situation and role of Filipina women in global care migration with the term ‘dislocation’. This refers to the change in one’s geographical location and structural position due to migration. It involves many structural and lived ambiguities from what is, to a varying extent, a ‘forced’ migration decision motivated by the need to provide financial support for family left behind, through the contradictions of past and present social positions that come from occupying a lower social status, such as being a domestic worker in a remote country, to de-skilling. The meaning of dislocation, according to Parreñas, therefore contains elements of low labour force status and ‘partial citizenship’ in a foreign country, and the emotional burdens of family separation, social exclusion, and (dis) belonging. Although dislocation stems from the ambivalences of a social and spatial position, it means far more: it is a framework of the latter women’s everyday (social) experiences, which is constituted by ‘thoughts, emotions, sense of self, way[s] of understanding the world’ (Weedon, cited by Parreñas, 2001, p. 197). Nevertheless, dislocation includes some potential for resistance and a limited ability to shape situations.

Research that examines the consequences of social mobility is rather polarised. While quantitative analyses generally put emphasis on the advantages of obtaining a higher social position and its integrative function, qualitative investigations tend to focus on individual struggles, the emotional costs of social mobility, and the difficulties of social integration, drawing on, for example, Bourdieu’s split habitus, or Lahire’s conception of the ‘splitting of

³ Albeit this change can be delayed which is called the ‘hysteresis effect’ (Bourdieu, 2000; 2002; 2009[2000]; Fáber, 2018).

the self' (Naudet, 2018, p. 8). At the same time, qualitative empirical evidence reveals the significant emotional difficulties that can accompany upward social mobility, but also illustrates various individual coping strategies (Bereményi & Durst, 2021; Durst & Nyírő, 2018a; 2018b; Durst & Nyírő, 2021; Fejős, 2019; Naudet, 2018) putting emphasis on the adaptation that can be grasped, for example, by the term 'reconciled habitus' (Abrahams & Ingram, 2013; Ingram & Abrahams, 2016).

Naudet (2018) examined the diverse effects of social mobility on individuals, especially in terms of social integration, problematizing their relations with the communities they leave behind. His cross-country comparison based on interviews revealed that significant tensions accompany intergenerational (upward) mobility, which can be difficult to resolve. These multi-layered tensions, which are structural, social, cultural, emotional, and moral, strongly motivate individuals to find ways to reconcile clashing expectations found in different social positions. 'Class defectors' (Bourdieu cited by Naudet, 2018, p. 7) indeed struggle with the question of how to fit into their new (elite) positions and accept their social dominance without 'betraying' their social origin. A coherent self-narrative can be an effective means of reducing these tensions since it prompts one to find a meaning behind mobility efforts that can legitimize one's new social position. This re-interpreted self-narrative makes it possible that, 'despite displacement, [one] can express [their] position in the social place' (Naudet, 2018, p. 15). Putting the focus on the evolving coherence of self-narratives and 'meaning-making' (Bereményi & Durst, 2021) enables one to interpret the diverse and ambivalent effects of social mobility 'in terms of equilibrium rather than an analysis based on "costs and benefits"' (Naudet, 2018, p. 15).

This shift in analytical focus can provide insight into the complicated (and sometimes stuck) process of reconciling different dispositions, which may entail the adaptation of habitus (Ingram & Abrahams, 2016) rather than displaying a 'split' or 'cleft' habitus. Habitus can be conceptualised as a 'sense of place': a 'sense of the social place of oneself and others' (Hillier & Rocksby, 2002, pp. 9–10) This definition not only underlines the phenomenon of relationality, but it seems to be suitable for revealing 'misfits' (Hillier & Rocksby, 2002, p. 18) of social and spatial positions that stem from mobility. This perspective can reveal how habitus can change within its limits (Bourdieu, 2000; 2002), pointing out which 'elements of habitual repertoire are chosen to be maintained or rejected' (Hillier & Rocksby, 2002, p. 22).

This conceptualisation of habitus opens up the analysis to aesthetic reflexivity; more specifically, of one's relationship towards the built environment and practices of place-making (Hillier & Rocksby, 2002). At this point, home-making is of great importance given that dwelling is 'the way we exist in the world' (Heidegger, cited by Creswell 2009, p. 172). To feel at home is related to the subjective feeling of 'fitting in' a social position (Berger, 2018), but it also presupposes a 'quasi-perfect coincidence of habitus and habitat' (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 147). Homemaking is a multi-layered process, since home is both the symbol and the materialised reality of our place in the social and physical world; it is the representation of one's social position, but also a lived place (Creswell, 2009; Toma & Fosztó, 2018; Tuitjer, 2018). As a consequence, homemaking is at the crossroads of newly developed and family-inherited dispositions, mobilising and blending different class-based preferences, practices and tastes, especially in cases of socially or spatially mobile individuals (Bourdieu, 1984; 2000; 2002).

3 Methodology

The main empirical bases of this analysis are two semi-structured interviews that I conducted on the periphery of a rural town in Hungary. The interviews were done in Hungarian and transcribed verbatim. One interview was conducted with the protagonist of this family case study, Sarah, a woman in her mid-forties, together with her husband who she met in London. Their migration experiences and Sarah's homemaking process were placed in the foreground of this three-hour-long interview, which was an open-ended process in which the respondents could thematise their 'concerns' and were able to 'show' themselves (Rácz et al., 2016). Showing their cultivated and landscaped garden and telling their story may be the way they chose to adjust my impressions about their neighbourhood (*Tanyavilág*), demonstrating that not only elderly or socially vulnerable people live there. Later, I conducted a two-hour long semi-structured family history interview with Sarah's mother in her home, which was located nearby, on the edge of the town. For the interpretation of the attributed and lived meanings of this specific periphery, I draw on additional interviews made with other locals living either in the same town or on its periphery.

The family case study approach is widely used in the social sciences in various forms, and this analysis of the interviews was inspired by two methods: hermeneutic case reconstruction (Rosenthal, 1993; Kovács & Vajda, 2002; Kovács, 2006; Vajda, 2003; 2007) and interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Rácz et al., 2016); both based on a hermeneutic attitude towards interview transcriptions. The first step of the analysis involved an attempt to reconstruct the family history by collecting biographical data; this borrows from the hermeneutic case reconstruction method, and the first part of 'the analysis of biography' (see Rosenthal, 1993; Kovács, 2006; Kovács & Vajda, 2002; Vajda, 2003; 2007). In the second step I focus on specific places and place-based experiences, including dislocation and homemaking, using IPA. Since the 'emerging themes' (Rácz et al., 2016) such as attachment to *tanyavilág*, feeling at home, homemaking, expertise and job experience, experiences of migration, changes in taste, and attitudes towards tradition are highly experiential and practice-oriented as well as cognitive, they allow one to grasp changes in habitus. Because of the experiential focus, this part of the analysis is primarily phenomenological and comes close to 'raw' empirics (Creswell, 2009; Rácz et al., 2016). Then, in the third step, I scrutinise different interpretations of homemaking, focusing not only on how this process altered the meanings of traditional farm life, but also its significance in Sarah's life story and family history. This step, which dynamizes the reconstructed family history and the place-related meanings that evolve through narration, is also inspired by hermeneutic case reconstruction and is called 'fine analysis' (see Rosenthal, 1993; Kovács, 2006; Kovács & Vajda, 2002; Vajda, 2003; 2007). At this point, however, I also use the interview with Sarah's mother to reveal intergenerational patterns of meaning. This part of the analysis focuses more on the constitution of meanings, since it (re-)interprets certain parts of Sarah's story in the light of their family history and vice versa; here the analysis enters a hermeneutic circle. Finally, I scrutinize the renovated farmhouse as a home and a symbol of the latter's social position as well as their lived place.

The analysis is primarily based on the themes that 'emerged' from interviews (Rácz et al., 2016), but also on the researcher's secondary (scientific) constructs in the Schützian sense (Schütz, 1984 [1963]) which involved attempts to interpret how (lived) meanings and changes

in habitus are related to each other, and how they shape everyday practices. An important limit of this analysis arises here, given that it is text-focused, and cannot directly observe everyday practices (cf. Feischmidt, 2007; Kovács, 2006). Focusing on home-making, however, permits scrutiny of the house as a *materialised* result of different embodied practices. Although the case study is fundamentally idiographic, as it interprets a particular family history it takes theoretical advantage of the fact that habitus is ‘transindividual’ (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 157), and it deliberately looks for possibilities for abstraction and analytical generalisation (Kvale, 1994).

4 Meanings of *Tanyavilág*

My field-site, a micro-locality that I refer to as *Tanyavilág*,⁴ is a traditional periphery of a specific type of rural town on the Hungarian Great Plain (*tanyás város*), consisting of separate individual farmhouses with small plots of land located relatively far from each other. This form of settlement is strongly rooted in Hungarian social history and is characterised by a specific relationship of the ‘town and its surrounding area’ (*város és vidéke*) and a lifestyle traditionally based on self-sustaining agricultural production and on residing simultaneously in town and on its periphery (*kétlakiság*) (Erdei, 1971). Before WWII, this dual form of residence meant not only a dual lifestyle (rural [agricultural] and semi-urban) but drew on a specific social mobility trajectory called ‘peasant embourgeoisement’, which continued in a modified form during the socialist ‘second economy’ in the form of farming small domestic plots of land (*háztáji gazdálkodás*). ‘House-plot farming’ as a mobility strategy, however, was based on overwork and self-exploitation. It facilitated the next generation’s social mobility, implying inland migration from the town from the 1980s onwards (Andorka, 2006; Erdei, 1971; Juhász, 2006; Vigvári & Geröcs, 2017), which was followed by a moderate level of international migration from the 2000s, causing a long-term trend to demographic shrinkage (Jelinek & Virág, 2020). Nowadays, polytunnels as places of intensive vegetable cultivation are still parts of the *Tanyavilág* landscape. They are seen as a way ‘at hand’ for making some additional income, but ever fewer people are willing to do such a demanding physical job.

The expression ‘*tanyavilág*’ refers to this kind of rural periphery in general, which presupposes a self-sustaining agricultural lifestyle. But it is also used by local people to refer to *their* particular rural town’s periphery; here, I have used it in this sense. *This Tanyavilág*, as with this type of rural town periphery in general, has constantly changed. It has become more heterogeneous both in social and in functional terms over time; it used to be place exclusively for agricultural production (cf. Kovács & Vidra, 2012; Timár, 1990; Jelinek & Virág, 2020; Vasárus, Bajmóczy & Lennert, 2017; Vigvári, 2016). Many people living there are currently pensioners; they were raised in line with self-sufficient agricultural or subsequent large-scale farming traditions. They live in their old but tidy farmhouses, still cultivate their vegetable gardens, and live on small pensions. Despite experiencing some disadvantages and difficulties – such as living in old houses lacking full comfort, relative physical and social isolation, and living alone – elderly people are strongly attached to *Tanyavilág*, and do not wish to leave. Newcomers form a socially heterogeneous group: a few better-off families run

⁴ All names in this paper are anonymised through the use of pseudonyms.

highly mechanised agricultural businesses; they live in Tanyavilág in bigger, renovated houses or they live in town. Some middle-class families have deliberately chosen to live in Tanyavilág because of its close proximity to nature, and the freedom and seclusion it offers; while other inhabitants who belong to the lower social strata are simply 'stuck' there. Some of them have abandoned agricultural work in the polytunnels and looked for other low prestige jobs outside of Tanyavilág. Lower (middle) class people usually come with children to Tanyavilág; they are attracted to the lower cost of living and housing. They are usually much less attached to the agricultural tradition. The most vulnerable people struggling with poverty, unstable family relations, or mental health problems have been gradually forced out of town – they live in old ruined farmhouses, sometimes lacking all comforts.

This social heterogeneity implies *relative* marginalisation (see Wacquant, 2007; Wacquant, Slater & Perreira, 2014; Váradi & Virág 2015; Vigvári 2016), which can be grasped in the almost complete absence of institutions (with the exception of a carer [*tanyagondnok*]) and the partial lack of infrastructure (lack of public lighting and transportation, and while it is relatively close to town, decrepit roads on which emergency vehicles cannot drive). As the farm has been a strong symbol of self-reliance and self-sufficiency in local public discourse, town leaders were quite unaware of the social problems of the periphery. It was only following the start of a specific social service (*tanyagondnoki szolgálat*) when the problems of isolation, the social vulnerability of the elderly, and poverty became apparent. The carer is a key figure in Tanyavilág, since he mediates the needs of people living here in relation to the town, and plays an important role as a social service manager. Some old people can rely on him for help with everyday tasks and getting to the town.

The carer is in his late 30s and grew up in Tanyavilág. He says that as long as the daily services and personal assistance can meet elderly people's needs, the local government tends to neglect this periphery, especially when it comes to infrastructural development. However, his position and opinion highlight another meaning of relative marginalisation. He said that people needed to work more in order to live in Tanyavilág than those who live in town. According to him, this is generally true in relation to the Hungarian countryside and Budapest.⁵ It is therefore not surprising that he has more work and very little free time, as he also runs a small agricultural business: 'you have to work a lot in order to meet social expectations and live from a countryside wage'. This social experience of relative, but persistent spatial and social disadvantage seems to not only be rooted in Tanyavilág, but in rural life in general. The ethic of hard work and self-exploitation are also reflected in his speech. These claims were echoed by Sarah's mother too: 'Because our salaries were so small, it was necessary to go to the polytunnel [after work]. There were no stories. We had to. My husband worked additional jobs [*elment maszekolni*] alongside his three shifts'.

5 An outline of family history

Sarah's family history is deeply embedded in Tanyavilág: her paternal great-grandparents and grandparents also lived there. Her maternal ancestors also resided in a farm in a neighbouring county. Sarah's grandparents gradually abandoned farm life; her maternal grand-

⁵ See further in the context of the Hungarian countryside: Szombati, 2018.

parents abandoned their farm in the 1970s, while her paternal grandparents moved to the edge of this rural town, but they stayed very close to Tanyavilág. Although her grandparents had gradually loosened their ties to Tanyavilág and oriented themselves toward a more 'urban' life through their jobs connected to the processing industry, they had preserved some elements of farm life such as maintaining a vegetable garden. This spatial and social mobility trajectory was typical of 'socialist modernisation', which also shaped Sarah's parents' mobility trajectory and aspirations.

Although Sarah's parents continued to disembed themselves from Tanyavilág, the area had never entirely faded from their family history. At the beginning of the 1970s, her parents started their family life in a small adobe house at the edge of this rural town, close to the paternal grandparents' house and not far from Sarah's new farmhouse in Tanyavilág. A year later, they started to build a typical socialist family ('cube') house (*kockaház*) by hand on the same plot. After finishing construction work, they took down the adobe house where they had lived for the duration of the work. They were both skilled labourers; Sarah's father worked as a craftsman and later found a job in a local factory as a repairman. Before his retirement, he was working three shifts, which ruined his health. He died in 2008. Sarah's mother was born in 1950. She worked in the glove industry from the early 1970s until the mid-2000s, when she was unemployed for a short period. She then worked in a cold store for three years until her retirement in 2007. Although they had worked full time in their active years, they still needed to take on extra work in retirement: Sarah's father undertook additional or informal jobs as a craftsman (*maszkeol*), while her mother worked in the poly-tunnels.

Sarah was born in 1976. Tanyavilág was a significant place in her childhood. Although her parents lived a more urban life at the edge of town, she spent a lot of time here with her grandfather. She attended the local primary and secondary school; she was an apprentice. She obtained a professional qualification as a dressmaker. She met her boyfriend when she was 20. They were among the first to leave the town for England. Initially, Sarah had a temporary job in rural England. Later, the couple moved to London where, with the help of her friends, Sarah found a job and became an appreciated member of an interior design team. A year after their migration to London, they bought an old farmhouse in Tanyavilág, which was bigger and more 'bourgeois' than the other traditional farmhouses there since it served as a central building that had hosted different public functions over time. Some years later, they returned to Hungary from London and moved into this run-down farmhouse, which they started to renovate. This renovation consumed their savings, so they decided that Sarah should return to London alone, where she could immediately start work with her former design team. The couple's relationship ended soon afterwards. While Sarah stayed in London and continued working, the renovation continued and was almost finished when Sarah's father died. Some years after, Sarah met her present husband, Robert, during her second stay in London, and they finally returned to Hungary in 2015. Since then they have been living in the renovated farmhouse in Tanyavilág, where the interview was conducted. Now both of them work in middle-class positions, and Robert has taken an office in town, while Sarah participates in a local development project.

Deep attachment to farm and agricultural life are less apparent in the family history of Robert, whose ancestors belonged to the agrarian proletariat. His parents were highly ambitious – their mobility trajectories were shaped by 'socialist modernisation', and they gradually moved from smaller villages to bigger towns, indicating social (occupational) mobility.

Robert's father had worked as an accountant, and after the transition he started his own small business. Just like Sarah's parents, Robert's father took on diverse additional agricultural jobs. Robert's mother worked as a teacher. When their children were attending school, the family moved to a bigger town, which provided them with better educational opportunities. Their children are highly qualified and obtained university degrees. Robert is a doctor.

After university, Robert went to rural England for seasonal work, after which he moved to London where he spent more than five years. He obtained significant expertise in catering, which may be the basis for his own enterprise in the future.

6 Migration experiences: lived meanings of dislocation

Robert spent almost six years in London, while Sarah spent almost fifteen and these lived experiences of migration strongly shaped their habitus. These experiences included difficulties and challenges, as well as some coping mechanisms which can be grasped by the notion of dislocation (Parreñas, 2001). Their overwhelmingly positive migration story includes effective coping based on a feeling of success and the internalising of new experiences, marking a sharp contrast between their stories and those of others from disadvantaged rural areas that were primarily framed by reference to structural constraints and 'constrained choices' (Durst, 2018; Durst & Nyíró, 2018a; Melegh et al., 2018; Váradi, 2018; Váradi et al., 2017).

Although their decision to migrate was not entirely without constraints, such constraints were much less evident when they spoke of their experiences. Both of them wished to 'see the world' and they consider migration to be an experience that leads to self-development. Robert's spontaneous migration decision, made immediately after finishing university, was primarily motivated by the desire to learn a language and his sense of adventure. After a short-term seasonal job in rural England, he worked in the catering sector in London for a number of years. In terms of social and occupational mobility, these jobs can both be considered a downward trajectory with some deskilling, although these experiences have very different meanings in Robert's migration story. His story reveals his wide range of potential for self-development and coping strategies in the context of dislocation (cf. Parreñas, 2001; Németh & Váradi, 2018). The latter are manifested in subjective feelings of persistence and ability and a willingness to work hard, while self-development is demonstrated by a self-made career with possibilities for rapid advancement which made him feel as if he was taking control of his life. (Even though his parents had previously oriented him to be an intellectual, he wished to try out something else.) While he was climbing the career ladder, he moved between jobs in search of better opportunities, as well as new inspiration and challenges. Meanwhile, certain areas of the catering industry have since become his passion.

...and everybody [in my family said] oh, you are a doctor and you err... [work with] drinking glasses, oh. Well, I learnt the standard, the way you handle guests and anyway, everybody else. And I enjoyed it. I still feel lucky about how this turned out. And then, since I was working hard, they promoted me, then I was no longer the one bringing the ice, but I was preparing delicacies. Later on, it generally happened that when I could not see that it [my career] was advancing, or I was given a better salary or I could climb up the ladder, I could afford the luxury of quitting, and I looked for another job. Then [I got] a different perspective or different ingredients, always something new.

Structural constraints that shaped migration decisions are more apparent in Sarah's story, but the desire to 'see the world' is present in it from the very beginning.

...and umm... we wished [she and her former boyfriend] to have a bourgeois house [...] by all means, but there, in the town, it was so expensive even at the beginning of the 2000s that we could not buy one. Anyway, this was one of our aims of going abroad, to get on track financially. But as a matter of fact, workplaces were also disappearing, there was the cyanide contamination in the Tisza from the very north of the river at that time, and um... well... we just got fed up in a way. We had had enough of the place, umm, Hungary and everything. And there was an opportunity to go abroad, to see another world there. This seemed [like a] very good [chance to be] refreshed, forget...

This migration decision was motivated less by an everyday struggle to get by, and more by a limited set of opportunities to move forward either in social or financial terms. However, although aspirations for social mobility seemed to be less articulated and reflected at this time, they already existed in the form of desire, and are symbolised by the desire for the bourgeois house. This goal could not be achieved, however, by their wage work in Hungary.

In Sarah's migration story, the experience of dislocation is barely linked with downward (occupational) mobility, since she found a job appropriate to her professional skills soon after employment in a temporary job. She not only fulfilled her professional aspirations in the interior design team, but she also enjoyed her job. This does not mean, however, that her migration experience was free from lived difficulties. She wished to be appreciated and recognised as a person. Sarah, just like Robert, eventually began to feel at home in London; this feeling originated from their professional advancement, particularly from personal recognition and appreciation, and from their respective and supportive social relationships. Because of these elements, Robert even considered settling there. Sarah talked about her second migration period as the time of an important revelation, and when she realised her power: despite the breakup with her boyfriend and grief over her father's death she could stand on her two feet and reaffirm herself in terms of competencies, independence, self-esteem, and self-reliance. She also had friends who helped her get through these difficulties. After these personal crises, she was able to embrace the diverse social experiences offered by a multicultural city. Although she had never planned to settle, she postponed her return to Hungary due to her enjoyment of her London life as an independent woman.

Sarah's story illustrates how dislocation can make one reveal and reinterpret one's values, dispositions, and belongings. Dislocation highlighted the values of the never completely abandoned farm life, and made hard work and farm life a constitutive element of her family history; it also showed how these values were reinterpreted in the light of new impulses experienced in London. She often characterised London as a 'cosmopolitan' place; her own open-mindedness helped her to embrace diverse values like respect for one's roots and past, and elements of environmental awareness. The following interview excerpt illustrates the personal rediscovery of family history, which is expressed by the idea that a barren land has value, and shows how a family's past is connected to the present; that farm life is interconnected with the cosmopolitan values interiorised by migration.

And I was coming home [from England] in this autumn weather, at the very end of October, and the sun was setting, and there is a part of the Kunság area, this absolutely saline soil that you plough in vain, since nothing grows on it, so it is left as barren grassland. And it was so beautiful,

it reminded me of Sándor Petőfi's poem about the Hungarian Plains⁶ [*Az alföld*]. And then I thought that peasants [*parasztember*] are the biggest gift from God, in my opinion. Because the peasant does not produce waste at all. And he reuses everything in the world. And uses only organic materials. [...] And um... this is what I try to do.

This visit took place shortly after her father's death; meanwhile, the renovation of the farmhouse, in which her father had helped a lot, was almost complete. This sudden revelation seemed to be a symbolic homecoming in terms of family history, even if the real return did not occur for a few years. The symbolic and cultural meanings shed light on the complexity of dislocation, which is not simply a process of physical disembedding due to migration, but also provokes a kind of mental and symbolic re-embedding in the same place through the rediscovery of social roots and the reinterpretation of farm life. Tanyavilág and London are directly connected, given that the renovation was financed by savings accumulated by migration. But re-embedding took place at a less conscious level too; the farmhouse is the symbol of the would-be bourgeois home, which happened to have been found in Tanyavilág, the home of her ancestors. This shows how a practical spatial navigation between places provokes a kind of social localisation process (dynamizing the question of mobility), while also being a symbolic, self-reflective process in which meanings, experiences, and practices related to these places are crystallised. As Sarah noted at the very beginning of the interview, homemaking in Tanyavilág and migration 'are interconnected, indeed, this is what is really interesting about it'.

On the one hand, homemaking is a projective surface which reveals how different dispositions stemming from family history and migration (home place and dislocation) are reconciled, and how the complex process of adaptation of habitus is realised – which is not always an easy thing to express in words (Bourdieu, 2000; 2002; Fáber, 2018). On the other hand, this perspective allows for an analysis of the symbolic meanings of homemaking, highlighting how a 'sense of (social) place' (Hillier & Rocksby, 2002) may be constituted through homemaking.

7 Homemaking: embodied meanings of dislocation and family history

Similar to the migration story, a fine interrelation of structural constraints and 'free' choices was manifested in the farmhouse renovation process. According to Sarah, she was 'destined' to find this farmhouse, believing that the house had somehow attracted her, and she simply recognised that it was what she had always wanted. This 'inexplicable' affinity, which represents habitually pre-determined choice as a 'destiny', is interpreted as *amor fati* by Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1984; 2000; 2009[2000]).

Actually, at some level it came as a constraint to have it. But then, um... it was a sign from God, indeed this house wanted me, this door [*porta*] wanted me. The English say 'don't let the house rule you, you rule the house' [said in English] [...] But I think exactly the contrary – in my opinion, this house chose me, I wouldn't have come here of my own accord. And we are in total harmony with each other.

⁶ For an English translation see https://archive.org/stream/translationsfrom00peto/translationsfrom00peto_djvu.txt

During the renovation, Sarah kept as many old pieces of the house as she could, and put these renovated elements back in their places. She had interiorised this attitude in England. 'I saw there for the first time how much one can respect the past and the culture of the past; much more than ever happens here [in Hungary], and in my opinion one can make a house even from a pigsty with will and diligence'. This attitude on the one hand echoes the ethic of hard work. On the other hand, however, keeping old pieces and renovating them did not fit with either the routines or the aesthetic sense of local craftsmen. For its implementation she had to cope with the incomprehension and aversion of the social environment. Her mother said that she just wanted to protect her from overworking and the risk-taking that accompanies such a renovation. But when, for example, she kept the old, non-standard window frames and put them back in after the renovation, the craftsmen looked at her as if 'she was out of her mind', although in the end they also came to understand Sarah's vision, agreeing that 'it was good that they were not new [...] and not perfect. Because they simply fit there'.

She did not simply give orders to the craftsmen, but occasionally worked with them due to how unusual the project was, while Sarah had always had an *affinity* for this kind of work. 'Well, this rose pergola was inspired by an English idea, I was building it with the craftsmen, because they did not dare to do it without me [laugh], they called me boss lady [laugh], because if I had not liked something, if the bricks weren't level, I would have made them take them off and do it again. And they did not dare to do it, so I did it with them'.

The bricks were the last of some supplies from one of the old local brick factories before it closed down, and using them was a way to preserve some local heritage. There was also a degree of tension around the term 'boss lady'. This came from the unusual situation of a determined young woman, having recently returned from abroad, continuing the renovation 'without a man by her side', while expecting a high standard of work, and not only overseeing everything, but if necessary demonstrating her own competence. This situation highlights not only how migration experiences are internalised and mobilised, but reveals deeper, embodied elements of Sarah's habitus. Sarah emphasised her practical mind-set and that she learned things easily, even by observation. Her parents were skilled labourers who worked with their hands, so this practical mind-set was 'inherent' (cf. Bourdieu, 1984). While her 'affinity' had been continuously developed as a professional dressmaker in the design team, Sarah also had a strong connection with her father and grandfather. In her own words, she had 'played with a trowel' in her childhood, and 'learnt the profession' from her father. He was the one who had discovered the old farmhouse, and the one who called her attention to it. He also helped a lot with the renovation. Sarah spent a lot of her childhood in Tanyavilág; she often returned to the old farm with her grandfather, where she enjoyed the freedom and closeness to nature. All these internalised dispositions were 'naturally' realised during the renovation. On the one hand, financial constraints fostered traditional and 'home-made' solutions at the beginning of the job; Sarah and her former boyfriend had actually moved into a substandard house which lacked proper heating and running water at the time. When Sarah continued the renovation by herself, traditional techniques and authenticity still remained highly important but financial constraints had gradually eased. Meanwhile, the re-discovered traditional practices related to farm life gained meaning, eventually finding their place in her story as they resonated with the environmentally and aesthetically conscious dispositions 'brought home' from London.

While gradually moving away from being (financially) constrained, Sarah was moving closer to her social origin as well as the lived history of Tanyavilág, given that these traditional techniques mobilised the embodied know-how of her ancestors. As the farmhouse is made of adobe, Sarah decided to apply traditional 'sticking' techniques (*tapasztás*) in the interior. The practical-professional know-how about sticking was in possession of her father, who was a craftsman, while Sarah's mother also had it in the form of embodied practice from her childhood spent on a farm. Thus, not only did the 'secret ingredient' (horse manure) and its subsequent shortage make them laugh while they worked together, but the old and natural technique brought generations closer together. The process of 'sticking' made an aspect of traditional farm-life knowledge valuable and respected, mobilised old embodied practices, and deepened the family's bonds through cooperation and the giving and receiving of support.

Sarah's mother's story reveals another layer of meaning in this family history. Due to harsh financial constraints, Sarah's parents had started their life in a remarkably similar way to Sarah and her former boyfriend in the old farmhouse. They had lived in a small adobe house, while they built their family ('cube') house (*kockaház*) with their own two hands. This small adobe house had also required renovation before they had moved in; Sarah's parents brought construction material, old doors, and window frames from Sarah's maternal grandparents' farm, which had been abandoned by the family. The re-use of old elements in construction is thus an intergenerational pattern in this family, but it has highly different meanings for each generation. The mobility trajectory of Sarah's parents was framed by 'socialist modernisation', which means they were able to get rid of old 'junk' with relief when they took the old adobe house down. For them, this might have symbolised their social advancement. For Sarah and Robert, the preservation and renovation of the old is a symbol of reinterpreted and reframed family history, in which something old might contain something of value worth keeping. This reflected attitude toward the past is based on selection and the recombination of values; more importantly, it condenses the meaning of their mobility trajectory: the revelation of the 'old' as something valuable and the 'personally suited' pursuit of tradition is indeed the lived freedom of choice.

8 A harmonious sense of social place

The renovation preserved old features of the farmhouse, but it was suited to their modern lifestyle: their cultivated and landscaped garden is a place for relaxation and aesthetic pleasure rather than production. The bourgeois house, which had been Sarah's dream, is reflected in their home's functions and aesthetics. This dream, however, presupposes a wish to adapt this lifestyle, while their homemaking also reveals that creating a home involves more than the purchase of certain objects. As Sarah noted, much fantasy and creativity was required for 'making this bourgeois place homely', while she emphasised that a 'bourgeois [style] did not necessarily make a place homelike'. This awareness illustrates the logic of their homemaking, given that its aim was not merely the attainment of a bourgeois lifestyle, but also the preservation of certain elements of farm life and one's social roots; it involved creating a kind of continuity with the past while also including the experiences of migration. 'You come [home], you go [abroad], you enjoy this and that, and you can identify with both'.

Accordingly, Sarah and Robert were reluctant to put stylistic 'labels' on their home; they emphasised that each of their objects has a story – just like Tanyavilág. Their home is a 'mix': 'there is peasantry, bourgeoisie, there is England and Hungary in it'. As a consequence, this farm is 'entirely different from any other', given that it is the materialised essence of internalised cosmopolitan attitudes and rediscovered farm life dispositions. The 'homeness' of this farmhouse is based on it expressing the owners' place, and 'being-in-the-world' (Heidegger, cited by Creswell, 2009, p. 172) which corresponds to their social origins as well as their current social position, obtained through migration. This is their home in which a 'quasi-perfect coincidence of habitus and habitat' (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 147) is realised.

The materiality of their home expresses their social position (Bourdieu, 1984; Toma & Fosztó, 2018; Tuitjer, 2018), which is apparently higher than their neighbours', but is also the lived reality of it, which is constituted by the routines as well as the meaningful formality of everyday practices. It is the pleasure of these small formalities that reinforces their decision to live the way they do in the place they do. As Robert summarised in the garden pavilion while we were having tea: 'When we spread butter on a slice of bread, the butter is in a butter dish, it is real butter, [and we use a] butter knife... small details like this make our daily life a little aristocratic in a way'. This harmony, expressed in formalised routines and aesthetics, reinforces the identification with this chosen lifestyle, while it creates and reproduces a harmonious 'sense of social place' (Hillier & Rocksby, 2002). On the one hand, harmony comes from these formalities of practice constituting habitus and lifestyle that while tending to manifest themselves as natural, are always acquired (Bourdieu, 1984; 2000; 2002). On the other hand, harmony stems from the reconciliation of different dispositions (cf. Abrahams & Ingram, 2013; Ingram & Abrahams, 2016), which deepens the meaning of migration and the social place thus obtained, given that this house would not be the way it is without the experiences and the financial means created by migration.

Nevertheless, this materialised and lived harmony seems more ambivalent when viewed from an outside perspective. Sarah, who is more embedded in Tanyavilág, said that they may have been considered 'farm-life snobs' in other's eyes. This reveals the misfit of their social and spatial position as well as the contrast between their home and lifestyle and Tanyavilág as a relatively marginalised place, but it also highlights the lived meanings of their harmonious sense of place. As Sarah explained: '... this farm-life-snobbery is that... I can... and... if someone is a snob, he can do what he wants. Not entirely, but one is his own master [*a maga ura*]. He can do what he wants. And it's like this: if I want, I [can] leave and I don't care, and I [can] come here and I live in my world. And this is a luxury in my opinion.'

Robert, however, was reluctant to describe their position here as one of snobbery, and emphasised only the sophistication of their lifestyle. Both definitions embrace the freedom of choice as an important attribute of a bourgeois lifestyle (Bourdieu, 1984), which is actually considered a 'luxury' in their eyes. This undermines its subjective importance and intergenerational novelty, as well as its relative rarity and peculiarity in this social place. At the same time, expressions describing their current lifestyle such as *cosmopolitan* and *sophisticated* first came to their mind in English, implying that they had been interiorised or realized during their stay in London.

Their house and garden fit, yet also do not fit in Tanyavilág. Whereas the latter contrast with their neighbours' places, the careful renovation 'makes them fit', producing continuity with the place's and Sarah's family's past. Despite the mismatch, their house demon-

strates an alternative lifestyle in Tanyavilág. The way they cultivate their garden and live in their house while focusing on the aesthetics of everyday life serves as a model for their neighbours who try to copy some elements of it, within the limits of their life conditions. It has a limited, but actual transformative power on this place, while other newcomers in middle-class positions also contribute to this change.

Although their house is the terrain of private life (the interview was completed in the garden), their garden is open to the public: it is a pleasant place designed for creative enterprises and for social gatherings. Sarah and Robert have already invited people from Tanyavilág and are trying to organise a community from the socially heterogeneous neighbourhood. Even if they may feel that some consider them ‘farm-life snobs’, they are respected by locals. They have many acquaintances, even from decades ago, since there are some old people in Tanyavilág who know Sarah not personally, but through her family. This illustrates their multi-layered embeddedness in Tanyavilág. They are embedded in the physical place by their home and social place by their ‘homeness’ and social relations (cf. Creswell, 2009). A layer of their embeddedness is also habitual, stemming from family history and traditions, which can be grasped in embodied practices – for example, in the way they combine family-inherited peasant know-how with modern environmentally conscious thinking in gardening.

9 Conclusion

This family case-study shows how social and spatial mobility are intertwined, and how places are mutually linked by dispositions, everyday practices, and meanings. The focus on the homemaking process of a return migrant couple reveals how different place-related practices and dispositions can be reconciled, resulting in a harmonious ‘sense of (social) place’ (Hillier & Rocksby, 2002). Their feeling ‘at home’ is multi-layered; rooted in a specific rural place (Tanyavilág) that is embedded in family history, in the aesthetics of this farmhouse, and is constantly reaffirmed by everyday practices (formalities), which reaffirm the pleasure of a chosen lifestyle in a desired home. The pleasure of their chosen lifestyle is indeed the lived meaning of their social mobility trajectory, since ‘freedom of choice’ or the ‘luxury of taste’ – that is, an aesthetically conscious everyday life – are actually attributes of a bourgeois way of life (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 175–177).

The lived meaning of this mobility trajectory is also reflected in intergenerational dynamics: this couple gradually loosened their social constraints through migration. This chosen lifestyle related to their home creates a level of distance from the necessities that were limiting their opportunities for social mobility in this town and had made the previous generations’ struggles, choices, and habitus ‘a virtue of necessity’ (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 175) amidst a framework of ‘socialist modernisation’. However, there is also some continuity as this couple kept, but managed to re-frame the old meanings of family history.

This mobility trajectory fuelled by transnational migration highlights the importance of the spatial dimension in interpreting social mobility, especially in terms of dislocation and home-making. Despite dislocation (Parreñas, 2001), however, this family history has never entirely been disembedded from Tanyavilág, where the protagonist’s ancestors lived. Place-related practices and family-inherited dispositions have shaped this intergenerational mobility trajectory, even if they are less apparent. Renovation of the old farmhouse was financed by international migration and work in London, while Tanyavilág, however, was

always linked by the old family ethos and hard work. Sarah and Robert's success working abroad was based on this family-inherited work ethic, which reframed dislocation by making it meaningful and also a terrain of self-development. Moreover, this renovated house is indeed the *materialised* object of hard work: it is financed by hard work done abroad, and it was built by hand, mobilising the embodied know-how in Sarah's family.

The materiality of this house and this homemaking-project provide an insight into the process of how family-inherited and newly developed dispositions can be harmonized; that is, how *habitus* can change within limits. The choice of home was narrated by Sarah as *amor fati*, indicating that 'homeness' is deeply related to the lived social and physical spaces inhabited by ancestors and its embodied traditions. In the case of this renovated farmhouse, *amor fati* does not just explain a seemingly inexplicable 'affinity' towards it, but through the homemaking process it means 'being content with what one is and has' (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 574). What this couple has now, however, is more than their ancestors had: this home signifies their obtained social position and their chosen lifestyle, which dynamizes even the logic of *amor fati*. They have a much broader perspective than their ancestors: for those living in Tanyavilág, the 'horizon' of potential social mobility was 'peasant embourgeoisement', which did not exceed the 'town and its surroundings' either in spatial or social terms (Erdei, 1971; Juhász, 2006, p. 271). Sarah and Robert, however, experienced dislocation and became cosmopolitans by exploiting the ethos of hard work inherited from their families. Although they came back to Tanyavilág, their position changed within it, and even within the town: their occupational positions are of significant importance to the running of the town; Robert has a leadership position within the administration. They are developing an enterprise and feel responsibility towards their community and environment. These are also constitutive elements of the bourgeois lifestyle (Juhász, 2006). These changes in their objective (and also relational) social position define social mobility; more importantly, they illustrate that even if they are (re-)embedded in Tanyavilág, they brought with them new attitudes and dispositions as socially and spatially mobile cosmopolitans. As a consequence, their homemaking shows the fine interrelation among different place-related dispositions and the reconciliation of those ethoses that pre-determine them, and reveals how a 'reappropriation of self' (Bourdieu cited by Naudet, 2018, p. 20) takes place in the process of the adaptation of *habitus*.

Their harmonious 'sense of (social) place' and multiple embeddedness also points out the importance of attachment and feelings in social and spatial mobility. However, the 'emotional costs' of (social) mobility are less apparent in this story. One reason may be their narrative position: a successful couple is speaking about their return migration/mobility *retrospectively*, and showing their home as a symbol of their social position and lived harmonious 'sense of (social) place'. Their emotional safety, 'homeness' and social stability, as well as an increase in the level of self-reflection due to their being mobile (cf. Bourdieu, 2000; 2002; Ingram & Abrahams, 2016) might also mitigate the relevance of the emotional cost in their story by making it well-rounded. Furthermore, the story is about re-embedding in Tanyavilág; the protagonists do not struggle with the emotional pain of leaving behind one's social origin (cf. Naudet, 2018). Their story is more about how one can reconcile different dispositions and values, and create some continuity with family and life history despite migration, dislocation, and social advancement. This is why this story of intergenerational mobility with attention to the foreground of the homemaking process was interpreted 'rather in terms of equilibrium' (Naudet, 2018, p. 15), pointing out how *habitus* can change within limits (Bourdieu, 2000; 2002). This is the theoretical reason why this analysis has put emphasis on

the *process* of adaptation and the *dynamics* of habitus instead of attempting to grasp different states of habitus by describing them as ‘reconciled’, ‘destabilised’, ‘cleft’ (Bourdieu, 2000; Abrahams & Ingram, 2013; Ingram & Abrahams, 2016), or ‘split’ (Naudet, 2018). Although these notions are relevant, since habitus is generally quite stable (Bourdieu, 2000; 2002), this intergenerational perspective permits scrutiny of how habitus can change within limits and how adaptation takes place in the long term.

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