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# INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE 2024-2025



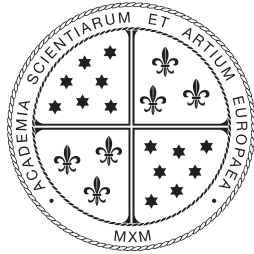
## HUMANITIES

Peer-Reviewed Proceedings Book

Editors: Daniel Siter, Blaž Podobnik

MARIBOR, 2026

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PRESS

**International Scientific Conference IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE 2024–2025**  
**PEER-REVIEWED PROCEEDINGS BOOK: HUMANITIES**

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ALMA MATER  
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The 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Conferences of Europe's Sciences and Arts Leaders and Scholars

**International Scientific Conferences  
IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE**

**2024:** In Service of Sustainability and Dignity

**2025:** Social and Technological Resilience for Health and Sustainable Development

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# EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

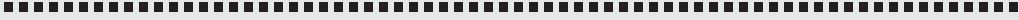
The present peer-reviewed proceedings volume brings together four contributions first presented within the framework of the international scientific conferences *It's About People* in 2024 and 2025. The volume reflects the thematic openness and methodological diversity that have long marked the conference's humanities sections. The collected articles range from sociological empirical research and reflections on political values to the documentation of artistic-cultural heritage and anthropological memory studies.

In the opening contribution, Adriana Anxhaku and Klara Sula examine the relationship between democratic values, political culture, and justice in post-communist Albania, reflecting on the tensions between inherited traditions and democratic transformation. Danijela Lahe and Ana Rotovnik Omerzu present a sociological analysis of attitudes towards surrogacy among certain groups within the Slovenian population, focusing on questions of reproductive technologies, social parenthood, and legalisation. Davorin Kralj contributes a historical and cultural study of the international sculpture symposium *Forma viva* in Maribor between 1967 and 1986, with particular attention to the relationship between artistic production, urban development, and economic actors. The article is additionally enriched by documentary and visual material connected to the symposium's legacy. In the concluding contribution, Renata Šribar explores inherited occupational skills through an autoethnographic and memory-studies approach, reflecting on the transmission of familial knowledge and its broader social significance.

We are pleased to present these contributions to a broader readership in collected form after their initial presentation at our conferences. We would also like to thank all authors, reviewers, and collaborators who contributed to the preparation of this proceedings volume.

Asst. Prof. Dr Daniel Siter and asst. Blaž Podobnik,  
Co-editors





**2024**





# THE ALBANIAN VALUE SYSTEM, ALBANIANS' APPROACH TO DEMOCRATIC VALUES, AND THE ROLE OF JUSTICE

**Adriana Anxhaku**, PhD, Professor  
University of Tirana, Albania

**Klara Sula**  
University of Tirana, Albania

## ABSTRACT

*Democratization studies, understood as analyses of processes of political change and the rights they generate, are inevitably linked to the values prevailing within a society. The collapse of non-democratic regimes and the transition to democracy are accompanied by demands for the internalization of democratic values among citizens as a precondition for the establishment of democratic institutions.*

*The consolidation of democracy likewise depends on the value orientations of the population and on the compatibility between political values, democratic principles, and historically rooted social traditions. Within this broad framework, the study of democratization in Eastern Europe occupies a specific place, since these societies share a common ideological legacy stemming from communist rule, which has left a deep imprint on the generation that experienced the transition.*

*In Albania, the formation of a democratic state based on rights became a central aspiration after the fall of the dictatorship. However, persistent difficulties in overcoming inherited political cultures and traditional value systems have complicated this process. In particular, the evaluative relationship between citizens and the state requires a harmonization of political values with those held by society at large, so that citizens' expectations of the state correspond to those of political elites.*

*This paper addresses the following questions: What are the core Albanian values rooted in historical tradition and how are they connected to politics? How were these values transformed during the period of dictatorship and transition? What mechanisms can facilitate the alignment of traditional values with democratic principles? Finally, what role does justice play in regulating conflicting interests and values within the democratic process?*

**Keywords:** Albanian value system, democratization, political culture, justice, rule of law, post-communist transition

## 1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODS

The particular path or trajectory that democratization takes in a country depends on the specific way in which each of these factors will combine with the others, as well as on the intensity of each in a particular case. Conclusions of course vary. Some societies produce successful transitions and consolidations, leading to different types of democratic regimes with different qualities. In others, transitions are delayed, fail to institutionalize the democratic rules of the game, and produce fragile and insecure democracies. Here we will focus on the main characteristics of the democratic transition process in Albania, the main inherited values and their impact on the construction of some democratic principles.

We will do this study of values during the democratization process relying mainly on two analytical methods: the one that places culture at the epicenter and the one that reveals the influence of politics on society's values. The first tends to focus on long-term developments and trends and to emphasize the importance of historical continuity, which often conditions human actions. The second gives priority to the capacity of social organisms to influence the course of events surrounding individual and collective social actors and their values. In general, the method that emphasizes culture is often, if not overtly, implicitly equated with necessary factors, since people are born and raised within a culture that they do not choose, while the one that analyzes politics is explained by the reasonable exercise of power or not.

But a third method that analyzes the complementation that these methods make to each other, instead of their mutual exclusion, is not excluded here either. This possibility of analysis takes weight, since different components of the entire process of democratization vary from one country to another as well as change over time, and that these methods present suitable elements to understand the nature and dynamics of a particular part of this process.

Although values appear to be a theoretical moral and political conception, they nevertheless help us understand why in some countries the rights and participation of citizens in decision-making processes work without problems, and why in some countries the principles of democracy, including clearly defined human rights, the constitution and its implementation, and the rule of law in general, do not work. This is related to the attitude that the citizens of a country have held in a relatively long period towards the leading policies of the state. In the Eastern European countries, but especially the Southeastern ones, this factor has been authoritarian.

On the other hand, we must remember: "What must be learned about democracy is a matter of attitude and feeling, and this is harder to learn." (Almond and Verba 1963, 5)

Taken together, democratic knowledge, that is, accumulated experiences with the democratic rules of the game, traditions of state rationality and the mediated exercise of power, etc., constitute a capital of cultural and political values that can serve good leaders, when the right circumstances materialize.

## 2 WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TYPICAL ALBANIAN VALUES IN THE HISTORICAL TRADITION, THE CONNECTION WITH THE POLITICS OF THESE VALUES

It is already known since the analysis of Almond and Verba (1963) the idea of the different degree of influence of a people's culture in following the democratic path. The legacy of the past has a certain impact on a transition, because it can limit the freedom of human actions and limit elections. As such, this legacy can leave its traces in the processes of transition and consolidation, but also in the type of democratic rights aimed at through social organizations. The type of relationship citizens have with the previous non-democratic regime is often considered one of the most important factors influencing a democratic future.

Some of the main general values of Albanians according to foreign researchers such as Nopça, Schufli, Durham, Valentini or Albanians such as Bobi, Dervishi, etc., are listed here according to the frequency of evidence, where the first ones are the most mentioned: Hospitality and being respectful to others, high moral awareness, honesty, great ability to adapt to another culture, ready to help, courageous, full of fantasy, tolerant in religious belief, independent and self-sufficient (individualists), disobedient to state or legal norms (Nopça 2013, 22-30), loyal, do not tolerate stratified hierarchies, wealth does not make anybody superior to others, so they are considered equal regardless of wealth, strongly attached to the family and the land, they do not enjoy work, freedom-loving, practical.

But the set of values that can make those citizens worthy of a democratic system has some supporting values, but there are also other hindering ones. This is not only because of culture, but also because of historical influences.

With this ranking, we are not saying that only Albanians have these values, as they share some values with the peoples of the region and the European continent. Also, these values are considered dominant in most of the population, according to the evidence of sociologists Bobby (2018, 138-142) and Dervish (1999, 31-176). On the other hand, the value of individuality or individuality does not mean that Albanians do not love the community, but that they are more inclined to disobey common norms, when they see them as an obstacle, and are even ready to leave the community. without excessive nostalgia, when they do not find the intended values there. Their reason, despite the dictatorial system, does not recognize any imposing force outside it, to decide what the Albanian will do with his personal life, what goals he wants to pursue in life. This is a strong conditioning that protects a part of good inherited values, it is encouraging a kind of hypocrisy and mistrust towards the laws of the state, especially when the state is either conquering or dictatorial.

But formulated in this way, this definition provides a good basis for embracing democratic values, but rather than democratic values, Albanians associate democracy with opportunities for quick prosperity, as I said in an attempt to gain the time lost in the dictatorship. With the freedom to make decisions on your own even though in society, with the freedom to choose out of the various opportunities that the world presents, and with the skills to acquire or develop property legally.

Another influence of the historical tradition is conditioned by the perspective of long-term factors of values and politics, which can influence processes and democratizing actors such as the legacy of the Ottoman Empire. The latter had an impact on outlining some values of the Albanian tradition, especially in the population of the plain areas of the country, since the highlands were more or less affected by them. In sharp contrast to the practice of the countries that were under the Habsburgs, the exercise of power in the Ottoman state was adapted to the types of rule of patrimonialism and sultanism which is an extreme variant of the former.

The most distinctive features of patrimonialism, such as the highly personalized exercise of power; the absence of a clear distinction separating the state from the ruler's family and the official from the private; the arbitrary, unlimited and unmediated exercise of power; personal dependence of officials to the ruler; the use of tradition as the main principle of legitimation; and, more generally, the tendency to refer to the state as a source of goods for the ruler, they are today with or without awareness values also for a part of the political class and the administration in Albania. These traditions were skillfully used by the leadership of the Albanian kingdom before the Second World War, but also by the dictator Hoxha after this war.

Such sultanic or patrimonial mindsets flourish in villages, especially in the lowlands. So being citizens in relation to the state, but oppressed in a sultanate way even during the communist regime, the Albanian peasants, who in the period of the democratic overthrow of the regime constituted almost half of the population, often revive the experiences of the old patrimonial culture in their attitude towards the state. Consequently, the centralized and arbitrary distribution of power is seen by them as something natural and they tend not to oppose it.

The dark roots of the past were there when the democratic transition began, and must be cured and improved with education in order to have a more tolerant and democratic mentality. The lack of previous democratic knowledge would become especially clear during the difficult search for ways to democratize society in the years that followed the fall of the dictatorial regime in the country.

Even in terms of the values that are summarized under the meaning of citizenship, Albania, like the other countries of the Western Balkans, started their transitions based on a weak democratic experience derived mainly from the monarchy, which never reached the basic requirements of a democratic system was nothing but an electoral regime, which was followed by another electoral regime, a dictatorship. Even the few democratic achievements of the monarchy period were degraded until they disappeared altogether by the totalitarian regime, which dominated for more than four decades. The behavior of citizens towards the state was dedication and obedience to the end to the practices and norms that accompanied the totalitarian regime and then the post-totalitarian one. This means that, in the political culture, the change of values does not come immediately.

One of the problems of the democratic values missing in the citizens of the Balkan countries in general, including Albania, was that they had the illusion that democracy could come very quickly, simply with the overthrow of the communist regimes, while the West had reached where it was with the democracy of only after a long time of wars.

### 3 HOW THE MAIN VALUES HAVE CHANGED DURING THE TRANSITION

Albania's economic legacy and backwardness influenced an economic demand for democracy. To be more specific, Albania did not have any scientific revolution, there was an elite enlightenment but not an industrial revolution. So, when it began its forced encounter with modernity (end of the nineteenth century - beginning of the twentieth century), it was only a society characterized above all by the dominance of the agricultural sector, a society in which the class of landowners, very powerful people, ruled over the poor masses; with an extremely weak urban system and widespread illiteracy and extreme poverty.

With the fall of communism, Albania had to develop a democratic political system and open a market economy. This „double transition“ seriously complicated the transition to democracy.

Albania's dictatorial system represents the lowest level of citizen questioning and organization, except for a few trade unions directed by the party-state. It was accompanied by a sowing of fear and the promotion of mass espionage up to the family, as well as the disappearance of any dissent or different opinion turned the society into a kind of contemporary 'panopticon'<sup>1</sup>. Thus, the transition, which by definition is a period of apparent indecision and uncertainty, constitutes an occasion in which politics can play a decisive role, producing political possibilities starting from this confused tradition of inherited values, as a precondition, developing new rules for their implementation, building new institutions, and above all, moderating the rules of the democratic game and generating the support required for their adaptation and implementation. It is the construction of the rules of the democratic game that becomes part of this influence that, after all, defines a transition. At these moments, the weight of the past becomes less decisive and social reality tends to become more acceptable to young people.

The type of state-society relations derived from a sultanate state heritage is characterized by a weak organizational capacity of civil society and, consequently, by low levels of articulation of interests. The unmediated exercise of power, which Montesquieu called important structures that help to put effective limits on the ruler's power, was gone. Western absolutism systematically sought to pursue reformist policies to make the royal state administration more efficient and rational, mediated by powerful mediating bodies such as the aristocracy. The importance of these bodies which Montesquieu gives importance to in his work, *The Spirit of the Laws* (Montesquieu 2000, 162-163) lies precisely in the fact that they were influential in preventing kings from often committing follies in their military campaigns and reducing the people to extreme poverty. So, in the future, they served as the basis for the development of civil societies in control and criticism of the government.

Some characteristics of the legacies derived from the Sultanate model of state-society relations, under which the elites and masses of Albania articulated their aspirations for democracy, is the ability to instill fear in this population through punishments and violations of their rights without being punished, which has been used from time to time even among our political leaders during these years of transition.

The personal and unhindered civil society exercise of power by the ruler, combined with the absence of law and regulations, brought about a social reality characterized above all by the weak abilities of formal structures, (offices, institutions), to protect their officials from arbitrary actions from above. The result was the development of a powerful culture of oppressive egalitarianism, built around the spirit of the collective as a flock of obedient sheep, which has had a long and ambiguous influence on the political organization of these societies.

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1 According to Jeremy Bentham, a giant prison where the cycle is observed and supervised by all others and in the center is the main observer, the State Party with the secret service.

On the other hand, the presence of this political culture has greatly complicated the path and goal of democratization in these countries and has also affected the quality of their new democracies and the rights of citizens. If egalitarian tendencies can be said to positively affect the construction of equality before the law and democratic human dignity, the absence of the liberal, pluralist element in these societies gives a potentially populist meaning to the democratic process. However, the egalitarian and leveling influence can lead, as Nietzsche warned, to the most talented being lost in the great sea of mediocre and the sultanate mentality of the state that support the mediocre average, since there is no need for intellectuals or elites who think the sultan thinks, has influenced the achievement of a deeply suspicious perception of political power and its manifestation in the state. The mindset of using public office for private purposes, together with the idea of submission to authority, effectively hinders the capacity of the democratic state, significantly weakens its legitimacy, and results in weak states. I remind you that the loss of legitimacy has to do with the non-compliance with the expectations of the citizens from the state, and the actions of the state itself, which translates as an almost explosive opportunity for social conflicts from the family to the institutions of the state.

Another influence of the pre-communist legacy on the political culture of the Balkan countries is related to the strong antipathy towards individualism (as the opposite concept of collectivism), characteristic of these societies. Indeed, the collective solidarity developed in the more populous societies of the rural areas of these countries tries hard to counter the effort to separate the individual from the group, which is often seen as a force of evil that threatens the unity of the small world in which they live. In these circumstances, separation (creating individualities within the group, leaving to do your own work, etc.) was seen as a mortal threat to the integrity, and very survival, of these communities. Although a bit changed, such a spirit is felt even today in action in rural areas. Researchers believe that the legacy of the pre-communist period in relation to the three aspects we have focused on so far, namely the configuration of the state, its links with society and the weakness of civil society itself, provide a clear explanation as to why the post-totalitarian system in Albania was unable to move away from the totalitarian type and develop a relationship between citizens and the state beyond fear of it.

The concern of the state was to intervene and conquer and later dominate civil society, typical of all totalitarian regimes, and which resulted in the flattening of this society.

#### **4 WHAT ARE SOME WAYS OF ALIGNING TRADITIONAL VALUES WITH DEMOCRATIC VALUES. THE NECESSITY OF MATCHING POLITICAL VALUES WITH THOSE OF CITIZENS**

Initially, after the democratic turn, dealing with politics became something common even among ordinary citizens, but then until today this feeling has become more and more indifferent, since there is an ever greater separation of the high state politics from citizens' interests. So the citizens have different demands in their political culture and the political parties that come to power follow other paths. Since politics in a democracy must be closely related to the demands of the people, it cannot behave and do whatever it wants with power while maintaining a democratic appearance in these countries.

The evaluative attitude of the citizens towards the mainly state politics requires a harmonization of the basic values of the politics with those of the citizens. That is, the expectations of the citizens from the state should not be different from those of the politicians who come to power. Otherwise we have social conflicts and there cannot be a basis of rights that works well in normal democracies.

At first glance, all of these post-communist societies, in one way or another, represent attempts to build citizen-state relations through reconciliation and adaptation of the rules of the new democratic game with the contradictory legacy of patrimonialism, sultanism, totalitarianism and post-totalitarianism. At a higher level of abstraction, they graphically express a painful ambivalence that comes from the invasions and influences these societies had in the past and from the overwhelming pressure to part with an infinity of values, memories, behaviors, etc., of the past that influence the political culture of citizens even today. In practice, this ambivalence, i.e. this mixture of good and bad feelings and attitudes towards the state, has been reflected in the appearance of two compet-

ing cultures and in a certain way mutually exclusive within the new democracies. The social layer that supports the democratic culture consists of the potential winners of the new political system and the market economy that has accompanied it and is identified with the reformist movement in favor of structural changes. The second culture gathers around itself social forces that feel threatened by political changes and want to preserve the old state of totalitarian state rule. As a result, the latter try to stop the implementation of changes in general or at least in those areas where their power is violated. Taken together, these constitute qualities that, although they have also appeared in other countries' transitions, are particularly distinct in Southeast Europe and directly affect the nature of the transition that is unfolding in each country of the region, giving it a high degree of indecision and instability of the entire democratization process.

*First property* of political values derives from collective solidarity, which, although it has its roots in the distant rural past, was clearly outlined especially during the totalitarian period, as an organizing principle of state-society relations, while on the other hand, from an expressed mistrust towards the mechanisms of market economy coupled with a strong preference for socio-economic and political pacts that give the state a major role in the field of safety at work, employment and protection from risks. These attitudes are in line with the traditional perception of the state as a father who takes care of everything that has to do with the citizens and directly reflect the backwardness of the latter and its weakness to organize.

*Second property* of political values is closely related to the first. The persistence of the tradition of the father (patriarchal) state was reinforced in the majority of the population by the fear of severe punishment not only as an individual but also as a kinsman. For example, who was considered an enemy, their relatives could be exiled to another city, or they could not earn the right to continue to high school, even though the children could be very good students. This initial fear disappeared with the overthrow of totalitarian regimes and people went to the other extreme, to a lack of reasonable obedience to apply any law, even if it is good in itself. Semi-legal or non-legal practices such as illegal constructions, which were accompanied by large and uncontrolled displacements of the population from rural to urban areas and the creation of extraordinary levels of inequality that directly contradicted the collectivist and egalitarian culture of the region's societies.

The authoritarian-monist mindset, being at the foundation of this way of understanding democracy, inevitably tends to invalidate the understanding of the liberal components of democracy and pluralistic organisms. This conception, which is nothing but a pure reflection of the traditional weakness of the civil society of the region, is also reflected in the construction of unbalanced political systems which have shown that they have little respect for the institutional oppositions, the institutions themselves, towards the strengthening and protection of political, ethnic or religious rights and in general a lack of desire to fulfill the requirements of the rule of law. A further by-product of all this structural imbalance between egalitarian-democratic and liberal-pluralist ideas of democracy is the reduced capacity of states to build effective mechanisms of checks and balances of power and in general to be adequately responsible for controlled powerful actors, illegal, sometimes even criminal activities that affect both the economic sector and politics, as well as hinder the formation of a culture of trust among citizens in the democratization process and undermine the legitimacy of governance.

Finally, the third property of political values in Southeast Europe, which includes Albania, is the tendency to reproduce in the new environment, the patrimonial and especially sultanic elements inherited from the past, of the "privatization" of public power and its use for personal benefits. Again, this is not a unique quality that only characterizes the states of this region. In many of the societies with late development, in which the distinction between public and private is not yet clearly drawn, such properties appear.

## **5 THE ROLE OF JUSTICE AS A REGULATION OF INTEREST AND CONFLICT OF VALUES**

Some essential qualities of the mentioned political values that are required to have democracy are that democracy is more likely to become a reality where we have a middle class of the population. When we have a separation of church or religion from the state, and with an increasingly large group of educated and accustomed people with certain values such as tolerance, respect for others, creativity, etc. One of the key values that summarizes these attitudes is freedom. This freedom in

the political sense is about how people make decisions about how they want to live and what they can do together in order to live the way they want. How people want to live was divided into two essential areas of inquiry, material goods and spiritual goods. Even today it is thought that social and economic conditions are what determine the degree of political freedom that people can enjoy. Isaiah Berlin says:

"The connection between democracy and individual freedom is much weaker than what some claim to defend them both. The desire to be sovereign of oneself, or at least to be able to participate in the movement of those mechanisms that control our existence, is as deep as the desire to possess a free space of action, and perhaps older." (Berlin 1996, 213)

While the other part has to do with some basic economic resources that condition the existence of a decent life, which is concretized in the interventionist redistribution policies undertaken by the state, which will be discussed in the section. Here we have to stop at the political meaning of freedom as non-interference of the state.

Human life itself must have a special intersubjective value for all, something that was not recognized as value in the communist system. That is, from the moment it begins to unfold, it is important to develop without cutting off its wings in some opportunities that man calls essential for his life. "And its fulfillment," says Dworkin, "is not only important for the person who has this life, but it is important in itself for all people. So we should all feel sorry for a wasted life, whether it's ours or someone else's." (Dworkin 2007, 35).

Thus, the degree of choice is understood in two ways: a) How many opportunities does the individual have to self-determine his life and take care of himself? b) How many of these possibilities does the system offer as a variety of values and goals to choose from?

In principle, both of them are described in the Human Rights Convention and are commonly known as social conditions that must be met in order to have 'human dignity'. That is, "human existence has the responsibility to determine what kind of life should be lived. It has the right not to depend on the will of others when making such decisions." (ibid.)

We remember that it was not only poverty that pushed the countries of Eastern Europe towards democracy, but also the feeling of injustice that came from comparing their countries with the West and the freedoms enjoyed by the citizens there. In our time, one of the main criteria for the development of society is the practical implementation of human rights.

But the fulfillment of these requirements obviously depends on what are known as narrow political variables, or otherwise the variety that the system offers in values and goals to choose from. Laws, political situations, or more specific policies such as fiscal, monetary, labor, environmental, urban, external, health, transport, etc. can be considered as such. These are so important that: "Changes in one of these policies can modify the distribution of assets and personal opportunities in the community and can block many personal choices and freedoms of each individual." (Dworkin 2007, 105)

In this way, the structure of state institutions constitutes a legal and economic order that fulfills some goals of the people, serving at the same time to arouse hopes, desires and motivations for their future. And since inequalities are always present, because we are dealing with different individuals, I would like to emphasize only a few of them: One of the inequalities that stands out the most, comes from the life perspectives of citizens. It is conditioned by people's class origin, by the advantages they have since birth, the advantages from which some kind of benefit has been derived, by good or bad luck, as I said, by good or bad circumstances throughout the life of the person. For example, from diseases, accidents, from unwanted unemployment or due to regional declines, etc.

Oppressed citizens in these countries did not have the opportunity to have previous democratic experiences, that is, educated but also applied lessons for opposing the authorities and the injustices they cause. Or the citizens in these countries did not have a minimum of familiarity with elections and real electoral practices, up to the guarantee of civil and political rights that a democratic system offers.

Such lessons undoubtedly help in the accumulation of 'democratic capital', the presence or absence of which significantly affects the critical period of democratic transition and significantly increases the chances of a successful consolidation.

The democratic capital of target values has at least two distinct ways or paths to reach citizens. The first includes in a general teaching that laws and justice are not something external that come from above from the party state but must be consulted with the public. As a result, the citizens themselves obey the laws with reason and not blindly as in the totalitarian system. This is known as "internal attitude towards the law" by Hart and is typically democratic, because it is related to the legalization of formally approved laws even by citizens (Hart 2010, 119). It comes from bitter experiences, i.e. from the experience of countries that, after trying a number of different systems, have come to the conclusion that democracy really had flaws, but it was the best and most preferable alternative from the others. While on a more concrete level, the democratic capital of the values related to the law is conditioned by the alignment of the inherited values with the intended and expressed values through the laws of the European Union.

For example, a criterion for evaluating political culture is the attitude of citizens and politicians towards the laws and the fundamental law, the Constitution. According to empirical surveys, many citizens in these countries think, unfortunately, that the constitutions of their countries are just a piece of paper, or at least that is how they are treated by politics as worthless paper. Similarly, the citizens of this region do not believe in the applicability of the law equally to all citizens, as they see the law applied with two standards, different for citizens and different for those who have power or do not believe that the state can be equal with its citizens.

More specifically, the possibility of the elements of the old regime to take over the initial phase of the transition and that, taking advantage of the lack of elements with a reformist and democratic point of view, usurped the structures of the state, transmitted intact this phenomenon, which poverty, the above cultural inheritance and wrong concepts on the market economy, helped to adapt only in the appearance because in essence they preserved the same totalitarian mentality.

The final result was the birth of a complex series of connections of interests that united the public sector with the private sector, in all-out activities of an illegal and even criminal nature, which are finally undermining the legitimacy of the targeted democratic state in Albania.

So the current state would seem more logical to be included in the category of electoral regimes, which refer to political systems that enable free electoral competition, but are unable to ensure the fairness of the process and generally put the state in full operation of justice.

The frequent changing of laws and constitutions according to narrow political or even worse private-oligarchic interests instead of being an instrument for more freedom, it seems that some laws are turning into interference with freedom.

Human rights, which, among other things, have the main purpose of not allowing the state to violate the subject. But even freedom and property can be considered a disguised form of private rule, of the subject's interests in law.

In a normal democratic society, every citizen has the right to the same degree of attention from institutions and to the same respect guaranteed by law, which society is obliged to provide without social barriers. Human dignity presupposes two preconditions that can also be understood as target values in terms of rights. First, everyone must pursue those goals that they consider important for the best possible fulfillment of their lives, without affecting such goals in others, and secondly, society creates opportunities, that the responsibility for success in one's own life not to attribute it to others (honor and friendship), but to attribute it to the use he has made of the talents and abilities he has.

The value of justice institutions according to Rawls, is that they should not ignore inequalities, and manage to establish the rules necessary to maintain preliminary justice. The education of these democratic institutional values directly affects the stability of the democratic system. "Getting to know this public culture and participating in it is one of the ways in which citizens learn to conceive of themselves as free and equal, a conception that, if left to their own reflection, they would probably not be able to obtain ever, much less accept or wish for its realization." (Rawls 2009, 108)

Our constitutional law recognizes as material sources (facts) of constitutional law the customary law in the country which can serve when there is a legal gap (Omari and Anastasi 2008, 18). This customary law contains within itself both the moral and the legal norm, as evidenced by the Albanian customary law with its canons. Another element of the moral base also appears in the behavior of individuals who act in law-making and law-enforcing bodies, where respect, courtesy, dignity and

good name have a value in the eyes, not only of the political or legal community, but also of the community of simple people.

Moral validity and the adaptation of legal norms to some basic moral values constitute a necessary condition for legal validity in Albania as well.

Justice therefore unconditionally legitimizes the individual's right to a freedom equal to that of the majority, although there may be views and interests contrary to it. The beliefs of the majority have no weight if they are mere preferences, feelings without any basis in justice. So, justice in the intended democratic system must remain indifferent to the dominant values and conceptions of good.

The fact that value judgments are subjective and very different from each other, that sometimes they can contain completely different judgments from each other, does not mean that each individual has a completely separate system of values. In fact, many individuals have a part of their value system in common. So a system of social values cannot be achieved by the arbitrary decision-making of a particular individual, but by the mutual influence of a group of individuals.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

Closing the discussion on some elements of inherited values that affect the path of democratization, we want to emphasize that these elements should not be taken as insurmountable obstacles for democratization. Indeed, we see them as conditions that will have to be dealt with and cooperated with during the transition to democracy, politics and civil society, (of which you students can be a part of tomorrow), by sought to minimize their restrictive influence and at the same time maximize its freedom. Moreover, not all of these inherited elements of political culture are activated or exhibit the same levels of influence during transition. Some of them can change quietly, without causing problems through political solutions and actions of leaders that limit their influence.

In the final analysis, their ultimate importance depends on how they are handled during the transition. This will affect the outcome of the entire democratization process.

However, today, we can say that open democratic politics have unfolded for many years without interruption, intellectual forces and a part of citizens continue to seek and support them. Within this relatively short time, compared to the hundreds of years it took Western democracies to reach where they are today, significant changes have occurred and progress has been achieved in a significant number of areas of life. Acceptable elections have been held, the rules of democracy have been built and continue to be built, violence has decreased, the alternation of power is carried out without disturbing problems and there have been no open tendencies to overthrow democratically elected governments. At a deeper level, however, the structures of democratic politics in the region remain entangled with difficult problems that risk hindering the achievement of those rights so sought after among Western democracies.

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## ATTITUDE OF CERTAIN SLOVENE AGE GROUPS TOWARDS SURROGACY

**Danijela Lahe**, Assistant Professor  
Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor, Slovenia

**Ana Rotovnik Omerzu**, PhD Candidate  
Alma Mater Europaea University, Slovenia

### ABSTRACT

*Due to the increasing trend of infertility worldwide, modern medicine has developed several methods that enable the reproduction of society, but these procedures require a reconceptualization of parenthood. One of these (new) reproductive technologies is surrogacy. The purpose of this paper is to determine the attitude of Slovenians towards surrogacy, considering the gender, age, and education level of the respondents, and to predict the extent to which the Slovenian population would support its legalization. The empirical research was based on a quantitative method of data collection – an online survey (N = 563). The questionnaire was designed based on the German and Polish models, and the collected data were processed with the use of IBM SPSS programme. The results have shown that Slovenians would mostly support the legalization of surrogacy, with support for gestational surrogacy being more pronounced compared to traditional surrogacy. A significant difference has also been found in the attitude towards commercial surrogacy – men would support it to a greater extent, while women have shown more altruistic motives. Among the studied demographic variables, only gender has proven to be a statistically significant predictor. In general, Slovenians are mostly in favour of surrogacy as one of the forms of social parenthood. Based on the results of our research and trends towards the legalization of surrogacy in some other countries, we conclude that this proportion would decrease with awareness of the legal, ethical, social, religious, and psychological limitations.*

**Keywords:** surrogacy, social parenthood, reproductive technologies, surrogation, commercialization of reproduction

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In Europe, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 15% of couples are infertile, and although there are no precise figures for Slovenia, we can assume that the situation is similar – one in six to seven Slovenian couples have fertility problems (Kovač 2021, 337). Due to the increasing trend of infertility worldwide, modern medicine has developed several procedures that enable (infertile) couples to start a family and thus reproduce society. One of these so-called (new) reproductive technologies (NRT) is surrogacy. The concepts of natural and social parenthood coexist in modern and postmodern societies; often within the same family. New reproductive technologies and changes in legislation are making it possible for what was long considered „unnatural“ or „unbloody“ to become socially and legally acceptable. Surrogacy as a form of NRT seems to have transformed the concept of mother and motherhood by breaking reproduction into several smaller parts and bringing about new types of motherhood; gestational, legal and social (Roy 2010, 95).

Surrogacy can be defined as a phenomenon which: »[...] covers all cases where a woman contractually undertakes to carry, bear and give birth to a child, whether for a fee or not, and permanently deliver the child to the client after birth« (Weber 2012, 16). Depending on whether the surrogate is genetically related to the child, two forms of surrogacy can be distinguished; traditional surrogacy and gestational surrogacy. In traditional (also known as alternative) surrogacy, the surrogate »lends her womb« and donates her egg which, despite some ethical dilemmas, is the most popular form due to its high success rate, relatively low fees for surrogates, and the clients can also influence the genetic material of their (future) child – something that is not possible in adoption (Pillai 2020, 91–92). In gestational surrogacy, however, the genetic material is entirely contributed by the woman and the man who are unable to conceive a child (Weber 2012, 16). Depending on the reason for which a woman chooses to become a surrogate mother, a distinction is made between commercial and non-commercial (altruistic) surrogacy. Commercial surrogacy is when the surrogate mother is paid to bear a child (Weber 2012, 16). The largest number of for-profit forms of surrogacy are still recorded in India, which was also among the first places where where commercial surrogacy was recorded. Altruistic surrogacy is where the woman who is the surrogate is not paid for her service. This form of surrogacy is usually chosen by women who want to selflessly help friends or relatives who are unable to start a family.

Studies showed that immediately after the first internationally publicised case of surrogacy (The Baby M case), we needed inter-state regulation of surrogacy. In the West, surrogacy is perceived as an infertility treatment technique, but surrogacy is on the one hand rare and on the other relatively well regulated (Roy 2010, 101). Increasingly common are forms of so-called cross-border surrogacy, where the commissioning couple decides to hire a surrogate in another country. Cross-border motherhood and reproductive tourism have led to the migration of women from poorer countries to areas where surrogacy as a business is thriving – India, North America and Eastern Europe (Trimmings and Beaumont 2009, 629–630). In the (former) Member States of the European Union (EU), surrogacy is regulated differently. Thus, we can distinguish between countries that (Eberle 2016) prohibit surrogacy altogether (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal); prohibit only commercial surrogacy (Denmark, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom); and do not have specific legislation regulating the field (Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia). In Slovenia, two laws (Zakon o zdravljenju neplodnosti in postopkih oploditve z biomedicinsko pomočjo, 2000; Kazenski zakonik 2008) prohibit biomedical assistance in the performance of surrogacy, which makes it impracticable in practice. Thus, according to all legal decisions, surrogacy is not completely prohibited, only (biomedical) assistance in its performance is prohibited, which directly means that gestational surrogacy is not feasible in our country, whereas traditional surrogacy is not directly prohibited by any law and is therefore feasible.

## 2 PURPOSE AND GOALS

The aim of this article was to find out what attitudes some age groups of Slovenians have towards surrogacy. There has been no major research in this area in Slovenia, and the issue of surrogacy has been addressed several times, but it has been theoretically discussed mainly from a legal and ethical perspective. On the basis of the literature presented in the introduction and existing research, we set out four hypotheses (H):

H1: There are differences in support for legalising surrogacy in Slovenia according to age.

H2: Respondents show a greater preference for gestational than traditional surrogacy.

H3: There are gender differences in respondents' reporting of which form of surrogacy they consider more appropriate.

H4: There are gender differences in opinion on why a woman chooses to become a surrogate mother.

## 3 METHODS

For the purposes of the empirical research, data were collected using a quantitative data collection method – online questionnaire. The questionnaire followed the German (Mohnke et al. 2019) and Polish (Lutkiewicz et al. 2022) questionnaire model, which was created to study attitudes towards surrogacy in the mentioned countries. The questionnaire was adapted to allow testing of the hypotheses, comparison with previously conducted research and to ensure that the questionnaire is not a template in terms of the number and complexity of questions, as this could cause respondents to drop out during the completion process. The data collected were processed in IBM SPSS 22. The questionnaire was completed by 742 respondents, of which 563 were eligible for analysis.

## 4 RESULTS

The results of the survey, which was carried out on a sample of 563 respondents, are presented below. Before interpreting the results in the light of the hypotheses, it should be mentioned that the majority of Slovenians in the target age groups (86%) are familiar with the concept of surrogacy. After that question we wrote down the definition of surrogacy for the respondents, to ensure more reliable results. 83.1% of the respondents would support the legalisation of surrogacy in Slovenia, with showing (admittedly non-significant) differences in age.

### ***H1: There are differences in support for legalising surrogacy in Slovenia according to age.***

Table 1 presents the results of the chi-square test for the variables support for legalisation of surrogacy in Slovenia and age. The chi-square is 21.618 and is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), which means that there is a statistically significant association between support for the legalisation of surrogacy in Slovenia and age. Most of the responses against the legalisation of surrogacy are found in the age group of 41 years and older, which may be influenced either by the fact that the majority of people have already played the role of a parent, or by the fact that they represent a more conservative viewpoint that does not perceive social parenting as equal to traditional parenting. The majority of respondents in all age groups would support legal regulation of in Slovenia (83.1%). Similar findings have been reported by German researchers (Stöbel-Richter et al. 2009, 127), who have studied Germans' attitudes towards surrogacy. Most would support its legalisation, but some (admittedly non-significant) differences between age groups emerged. In particular, those aged 45 and over were opposed to legalisation. Bulgarians would also support the legalisation of surrogacy – 91% of all respondents would support legalisation compared to Slovenians, with support mainly expressed by those under 35 (Bakova et al. 2018).

**Table 1: Support for legalising surrogacy in Slovenia by age**

			Would you support legal regulation of surrogacy in Slovenia?		Total	Chi-square (sig.)
			Yes	No		
Age	15-20	N	129	21	150	21,618 (0,000)
		f	86 %	14 %	100 %	
	21-30	N	61	17	78	
		f	78,2 %	21,8 %	100 %	
	31-40	N	102	4	106	
		f	96,2 %	3,8 %	100 %	
	41+	N	176	53	229	
		f	76,9 %	23,1 %	100 %	
Total		N	468	95	563	
f		83,1 %	16,9 %	100 %		

(Source: Own study 2023.)

### ***H2: Respondents show a greater preference for gestational rather than traditional surrogacy.***

Table 2 shows the results of the binomial test we used to test for statistically significant deviations from the theoretically expected distribution of variables in the two categories. The proportion of respondents who consider traditional surrogacy to be more appropriate is 40 %, while 60% of respondents consider gestational surrogacy to be more appropriate. The proportion of respondents who consider gestational surrogacy more appropriate than traditional surrogacy is statistically significantly higher than 50% ( $p < 0.05$ ). The second hypothesis is accepted, which means that respondents show a higher preference for gestational than traditional surrogacy. The results did not surprise us, as after all, in some European countries where surrogacy is legalised, it is also the only option – Ukraine, Greece, Russia. Gestational surrogacy has an important advantage over other forms of social parenting; the commissioning parents are genetically linked to the child. Recall only that couples choose traditional surrogacy (if possible) because of the lower chance of complications and the higher chance of successful fertilisation (Wilson and Luke 2012). Constantinidis and Cook (2012) found a similar pattern in an Australian study of attitudes towards surrogacy (with a sample of 195 respondents). In their survey, they introduced the concepts of traditional and gestational motherhood to respondents (as we did in our survey), who overwhelmingly showed higher support for gestational than traditional surrogacy. The main concerns related to traditional surrogacy are the latter; the surrogate having to give up the child after birth and the difficulty of defining parenthood (ibid.).

**Table 2: Gender-specific views on which form of surrogacy seems more acceptable**

	Category	N	Proportion studied	Test share	Sig.
Which type of surrogacy you find more appropriate?	Traditionally, alternative surrogacy	223	0,40	0.50	0.000
	Gestational surrogacy	340	0,60		
Total		563	1,00		

(Source: Own study 2023.)

### ***H3: There are gender differences in respondents' reporting of which form of surrogacy they consider more appropriate.***

The third hypothesis was tested using a chi-square test. The results are presented in Table 3. As can be seen from the table, the chi-square is 11.279 and is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), which means that there is a statistically significant association between respondents' reporting of which form of surrogacy they consider more appropriate and their gender. The majority of women consider altruistic, non-commercial surrogacy to be more appropriate (55.8 %). This pattern is also observed among respondents who answered "other" to the gender question (100%). The majority of men (52.9%) consider commercial to be more appropriate.

**Table 3: Gender-specific views on which form of surrogacy is considered more appropriate.**

			What is the reason a woman decides to become a surrogate mother?		Total	Chi-squared (sig.)
			Do you find it more appropriate?			
			Altruistic surrogacy	Commercial surrogacy		
Gender	Men	N	88	99	187	11,279 (0,004)
		f	47,1 %	52,9 %	100 %	
	Woman	N	207	164	371	
		f	55,8 %	44,2 %	100 %	
	Other	N	5	0	5	
		f	100 %	0,0 %	100 %	
Total		N	295	268	563	
f		52,4 %	47,6 %	100 %		

(Source: Own study 2023.)

We accept the hypothesis, which means that there are gender differences in respondents' reporting of which form of surrogacy they consider more appropriate – men prefer commercial and women prefer non-commercial surrogacy.

The results can be interpreted in terms of the biologically determined roles played by men and women during pregnancy. The results of the analysis showed that the majority of the respondents who identified themselves as women support a non-commercial form of surrogacy. A woman's body conceives and gives birth to a child, but undergoes significant changes during pregnancy. We can conclude that the respondents (especially those who already have children) saw surrogacy as a mission rather than a means of earning money. Mora (2021) notes that surrogacy, especially in countries where it is commercially permitted (USA, India before the ban), reinforces and deepens gender inequalities in traditional role expectations in partner and family relationships. The popularisation of commercial surrogacy (including in the media) thus not only reinforces inequalities, but also influences men's perception of surrogacy; the focus is on earning money, the female body is turned into an object, and the expected role of the mother shapes the psychological and physical consequences for the surrogate mother (especially if the woman – which is usually a prerequisite for becoming a surrogate mother – is already the biological mother of her own children) (ibid.).

***H4: There are gender differences in opinion on why a woman chooses to become a surrogate mother.***

The results of the analysis of the fourth hypothesis are shown in Table 4. The chi-square is 25.335 and is statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), which means that there is a statistically significant association between the reason for a woman's decision to become a surrogate mother and gender. The majority of women (49.2%) believe that the reason is to help couples who are unable to start their own families, while the majority of men (44.5%) believe that it is for pay. Looking at the overall percentage of responses, the most common answers are for pay (41.7%) and altruistic reasons why a woman decides to become a surrogate mother (44.4%).

**Table 4: Gender-specific views on the reason why a woman decides to become a surrogate mother.**

			Gender			Total	Chi-squared test (sig.)
			Men	Women	Other		
What do you think is the main reason a woman decides to become a surrogate mother?	Wants to help couples who cannot create their own families.	N	158	92	0	250	25,33 5 (0,001)
		f	42,6 %	49,2 %	0 %	44,4 %	
	She wants to enjoy it during her pregnancy.	N	4	12	0	16	
		f	1,1 %	6,4 %	0 %	2,8 %	
	It is their life mission and fulfilling.	N	29	11	2	42	
		f	7,8 %	5,9 %	40 %	7,5 %	
	For payment.	N	165	67	3	235	
		f	44,5 %	35,8 %	60 %	41,7 %	
	Other	N	15	5	0	20	
		f	4 %	2,7 %	0 %	3,6 %	
	Total	N	371	187	5	563	
		f	100 %	100 %	100 %	100 %	

(Source: Own study 2023.)

The fourth hypothesis is accepted, as there is a correlation between gender and the opinion on why a woman chooses to become a surrogate mother. On average, women consider the reason for becoming a surrogate to be altruistic (helping couples), while men consider it to be economic; for pay. The results can be linked to the findings of hypothesis 3 – there are gender differences among respondents in reporting which form of surrogacy they find more appropriate; men find commercial more appropriate, women find non-commercial more appropriate. Thus, due to the concept of surrogacy that has been created, men consider that the main reason why a woman chooses to become a surrogate mother is economic (and gets paid for it), while women put the altruistic reason at the forefront (and therefore find altruistic surrogacy more appropriate). A review of existing foreign research shows that in third world countries (India, Iran), the economic motive is at the forefront (Taebi, 2020; Kumari, 2010). Some contemporary American and European studies examining women's reasons for becoming a surrogate mother have shown that it is not economic but altruistic motives that are at the forefront (van den Akker 2007; Jadva et al. 2003). A prominent American study by Jadva et al. (2003, 2199-2203) found that women's motivation is mainly altruistic - they want to help the infertile couple (91% of all mothers involved). Certainly, women are driven to choose an altruistic motive and to support non-commercial surrogacy by their biological role; that they are already or will become mothers themselves.

## 5 DISCUSSION

A review of the theoretical background reveals that in most sources surrogacy is considered as a consequence of infertility or medically justified problems with family formation, and is thus presented as an alternative to social parenthood. Only some studies present surrogacy as a family-building option also for couples who do not have problems with conception but choose surrogacy for other reasons. The review of the research shows that there is a lack of uniformity in the interpretation of the factors influencing attitudes towards surrogacy. This depends on socio- demographic factors such as gender, religion, age; infertility problems and economic status, while positive or negative evaluations are related to the portrayal of surrogacy in the media (Lutkiewicz 2022, 4). Bulgarians would overwhelmingly support the legalisation of surrogacy (91%). Also, surveys conducted in the UK (Poote and van den Akker 2009; Bruce-Hickman et al. 2009), where non-commercial surrogacy is currently legalised, show high support for commercial surrogacy. The German public is more re-

luctant to legalise surrogacy and does not support the statute; only one third of Germans surveyed would support legalisation, but only as an alternative for family formation when all medically supported infertility treatments have been exhausted (Stöbel Richter et al. 2009). There is also low support for surrogacy among the Turkish public (Kilic et al. 2009). The aforementioned Polish survey measuring the attitudes of Poles towards surrogacy, which was the basis for the questionnaire included in this study (Lutkiewicz et al. 2022), showed that Poles are overwhelmingly in favour of legalising surrogacy, with the only (statistically significant) factor influencing individual attitudes towards surrogacy being religiosity. Respondents who identified themselves as religious showed less support for the legalisation and funding of surrogacy, and they also did not see surrogacy as a form of reproduction (Lutkiewicz et al. 2023).

According to our survey 83.1% of Slovenians would support legalisation. In the survey, respondents were presented with the forms of surrogacy and asked which they considered more appropriate. We found that Slovenians are more in favour of gestational surrogacy than traditional surrogacy. This finding can be argued from the general popularisation of surrogacy in the media, which usually highlights unhappy stories, ethical dilemmas (parenting issues) and the psychological consequences for mother and child of separation immediately after birth. Gestational surrogacy also has an important advantage over other forms of social parenting (adoption, fostering) - the parents (or at least one of them) are genetically linked to the child. Constantinidis and Cook (2012) make a similar point in their study, highlighting the concerns related to traditional surrogacy raised by the respondents; the surrogate having to give up the child after birth and the difficulty of defining parenthood (ibid.).

It is interesting that men find commercial and women non-commercial, altruistic forms of surrogacy more acceptable. This finding is reinforced by gender differences in the reporting of what they consider to be the main reason why a woman chooses to become a surrogate mother. Thus, given the way surrogacy is socially perceived, men consider that the main reason why a woman chooses to become a surrogate mother is economic (i.e. getting paid through commercial surrogacy), while women put the altruistic reason at the forefront (and therefore find altruistic surrogacy more appropriate). It can be concluded that female respondents (especially those who have already experienced the pregnancy period) see surrogacy as a mission rather than a means of earning money. The perceptions of commercial surrogacy as co-created by the media not only reinforce inequalities but also influence men's perceptions of surrogacy (ibid.). As a result, it seems that even with this type of question, it appears that from the point of view of the male respondents, a woman is capable of bearing and giving birth to a child, and then giving it up after the birth simply for the pay. In third world countries (India, Iran), women's decisions to become surrogate mothers are dominated by economic motives (Taebi, 2020; Kumari, 2010). However, some recent American and European studies have shown that altruistic rather than economic motives are at the forefront (van den Akker, 2007; Jadva et al., 2003).

## 6 CONCLUSION

We can conclude that Slovenians are generally in favour of surrogacy as a form of social parenting, and that if it were legalised, a relatively high proportion of them would support it. According to the results of the survey, it can be concluded that if we were aware of the legal, ethical, social, religious and psychological constraints, this proportion would decrease (this has also been shown in surveys of comparable countries). Why? Surrogacy has transformed the concept of mother and motherhood by breaking reproduction into several smaller parts and introducing new types of motherhood; pregnancy, legal and social. In recent years, same-sex rights have become equal to heterosexual rights - most recently with the Constitutional Court's decision that a same-sex couple can adopt a child. The latter has sparked controversy in the Slovenian public, linked to the question of parenthood: will a child in a gay family have a mother and vice versa; will a child in a lesbian family have a father. These questions indicate the need for further public and academic discussion of the legal, ethical, and social dimensions of surrogacy and parenthood.

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## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES:

**Danijela Lahe** is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor. Her research interests include family and partner relations, education and social gerontology. She is particularly interested in young people's attitudes towards old age, ageing and the elderly. Danijela Lahe is a lecturer in "Sociology of the Family", "Sociology of Education", "Social Gerontology", "Gender Sociology", "Sociology of Family and Partnership Life".

**Ana Rotovnik Omerzu** is a Professor at the Celje-Center Secondary School, a PhD student in Social Gerontology at Alma Mater Europaea University, and a teaching assistant at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor. Her research focuses on technophobia among older adults and on designing interventions to reduce technophobia among older adults in Slovenia. She is also interested in contemporary trends in active ageing.

# SYMBIOSIS OF ECONOMY AND ART: THE CASE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE SYMPOSIUM FORMA VIVA IN MARIBOR FROM 1967 TO 1986

Davorin Kralj, PhD  
Alma Mater Europaea University, Slovenia

## ABSTRACT

*Forma viva is an established name for sculpture symposia in Slovenia. The working sites were located in four locations, in Seča near Portorož (stone), in Kostanjevica na Krki (wood), in Ravne na Koroškem (iron) and lastly in 1967 in Maribor (concrete). This article examines the Forma viva International Sculpture Symposium in Maribor from 1967 to 1986 from the perspective of the symbiosis of the cooperation between business and art. The caring city mayors of Maribor put an urbanistically interesting new approach of artistic creation in the raw concrete settlements at the youngest international sculptors' symposium Forma viva in Maribor. Selected national and international established sculptors are invited to place artworks alongside newly constructed concrete buildings in contemporary new-build dormitory working-class suburbs. And in concrete, at the initiative of the construction company Stavbar. The material posed the greatest challenge to all (co-)stakeholders in (co-)creating a great work of art in an open living environment. The symbiosis between business and art permanently marks the urban space with concrete sculptures by local and international artists. The research question of why there was collaboration between Maribor construction companies and artists, sculptors who realised artistic ideas in the then less known material concrete, will be explained. I used the method of fieldwork with observation of the sculptures created. I studied the literature and interviewed former employees of Stavbar who were involved in the realisation of the artworks. The results are presented with photographs from archives and the recorded memories of Stavbar employees and other stakeholders. In the discussion, I explain why cooperation between business and art is an important aspect of sustainability. Finally, I conclude the debate with suggestions for the care and preservation of the rich cultural heritage and future possibilities for cooperation between business and the arts.*

**Keywords:** art, concrete, economy, sculpture, symposium

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Concrete gained importance in mass construction in the 20th century, beginning in the 1950s. It is particularly established in the years from 1960 to 1970 during the period of Brutalism, the mass construction of concrete housing (Hartwood 2022) in the post-war period, as an aspect of class architecture. The class architecture of Brutalism is strongly established in the former Yugoslavia, Slovenia and in the industrially developing Maribor after the Second World War. The concern of the city mayor's office placed an urbanistically interesting and logical approach of artistic creation in the neighbourhood of raw concrete at the youngest international symposium of sculptors Forma viva in Maribor between 1967 and 1986 (Ciglencečki 2015). Highly regarded local and foreign artists were invited to the enlarged working-class suburbs of Maribor's streets (Radovanovič 2015) to install artworks in the building material concrete in newly constructed urban formations (initiated by the construction company Stavbar), characteristically influencing the transformation and quality of the interspaces of art (Puncer 2018). It is the creation of artists' ideas in one of the most complex sculptural materials of the time, and which posed the greatest challenge to all (co-)working stakeholders in the (co-) creation and systemic approach (Mulej 1992) in achieving the outlined artistic ideas. I would like to draw attention to the vitality of these sculpture meetings, to their international character, which has followed them throughout Europe and at home. The responsibility for ensuring that the reputation does not dissipate too quickly, does not turn into a mere memory of something that "once was", lies with all of us. The citizens of Maribor are unfortunately not sufficiently aware of the unique enrichment of our environment, and not enough attention is paid to preserving and inspiring young generations of artists and how important it is to be (Fromm 2004). Cooperation between business and art is not a given, and there is an urgent need to explore this kind of phenomenon and preserve good practices of cooperation for future generations.

## 2 PURPOSE AND GOALS

The aim of the article is to present concrete as an artistic material, the role of concrete in the architectural period of Brutalism and to present the international symposium of sculptors Forma Viva in Maribor 1967-1986, the activities of renowned national and international sculptors who worked in concrete. The purpose of the study is:

- to examine the link between concrete, Brutalism and the international sculpture symposium Forma viva Maribor from 196 to 1986,
- to establish the role and significance of the International Sculptors' Symposium Forma viva Maribor from 1967 to 1986 in the narrower and wider artistic environment,
- to examine the socio-economic aspects at the time of the International Sculptors' Symposium Forma viva Maribor from 1967 to 1986
- to study the organisational aspects of the International Sculpture Symposium Forma viva Maribor from 1967 to 1986,
- to examine the role and importance of Maribor construction companies in the organisation of the International Sculptors' Symposium Forma viva Maribor 1967-1986,
- to examine the role and participation of key persons during the International Sculptors' Symposium Forma viva Maribor 1967-1986
- to study the sculptors who participated in the International Sculptors' Symposium Forma viva Maribor 1967-1986,
- to find out what is the attitude of the citizens of Maribor towards the rich cultural heritage of manufactured concrete sculptures by local and internationally renowned sculptors,
- to formulate a proposal for the preservation of concrete sculptures as an important cultural heritage of the city of Maribor.

The aim is to study the phenomenon of the international symposium of sculptors Forma viva 1967-1986 in Maribor and to identify the use of concrete as one of the most used materials in construction, but less known and used in the artistic pursuit of sculpture. Concrete as a building material has been strongly established and is particularly emphasised in architecture during the Brutalist period. The aim is also to demonstrate the importance and awareness that the main contemporary condition

for a good life is the intelligent and balanced sustainable management of public urban space. In the construction of buildings, in accordance with the guidelines of modern sustainable construction, developers should take into account and promote the opportunity to incorporate contemporary concrete sculptural works to improve the living environment.

### 3 METHODS

The research concept stems from the choice of the topic of the research on the connection between concrete, Brutalism and the international sculpture symposium *Forma viva 1967-1986* in Maribor. It is conceived with the formulation of the questions presented in the previous section. This is followed by data collection, which includes fieldwork through observation, photography, study of documentary material from various sources, as well as personal interviews with key stakeholders and interviews with random respondents. This is followed by data classification, analysis, interpretation and storage. The final approach includes construction and synthesis; writing a synopsis and script for a documentary film, a PhD thesis, a scientific monograph and presentation of the research results. I have used the following methods to familiarise myself with the content of the research area:

- studying the literature (books, journals, articles, newspapers, reports, standards, etc.);
- studying the content of professional and scientific articles (including the internet);
- study of documents and experiences of experts in the field of art history studies and research on art history and other fields of expertise in Maribor;
- study of documents of construction and other companies in Maribor, which are studies of construction and building projects in Maribor; studies of the companies that have participated in the *Forma Viva* project in Maribor;
- interviews and consultations with experts, artists and other experienced professionals, individuals and connoisseurs;
- own experiences and insights are taken into account in the research;
- study of documents from various archives (Maribor Regional Archive, Maribor Cultural Heritage Institute Archive, Maribor Art Gallery Archive, private archives)
- study of documents reported in various media (newspaper, TV, etc.);
- fieldwork of visiting and photographing concrete sculptures and
- conducting 20 to 25 unstructured interviews of selected and random indirect and direct contemporaries of the international sculpture symposium *Forma Viva* in Maribor 1967-1986.

Given the objectives and the concept of the research work, a quantitative study was also carried out. For the analysis of the questionnaire on a sample of 120 respondents, I used the descriptive statistical method of research. It is suitable for descriptions of variable values, frequency distributions, graphical methods for displaying frequency distributions (graph), descriptive statistics (mean: arithmetic mean), etc. The main hypotheses raised in the survey, which were not empirically investigated, were tested by means of the questionnaire.

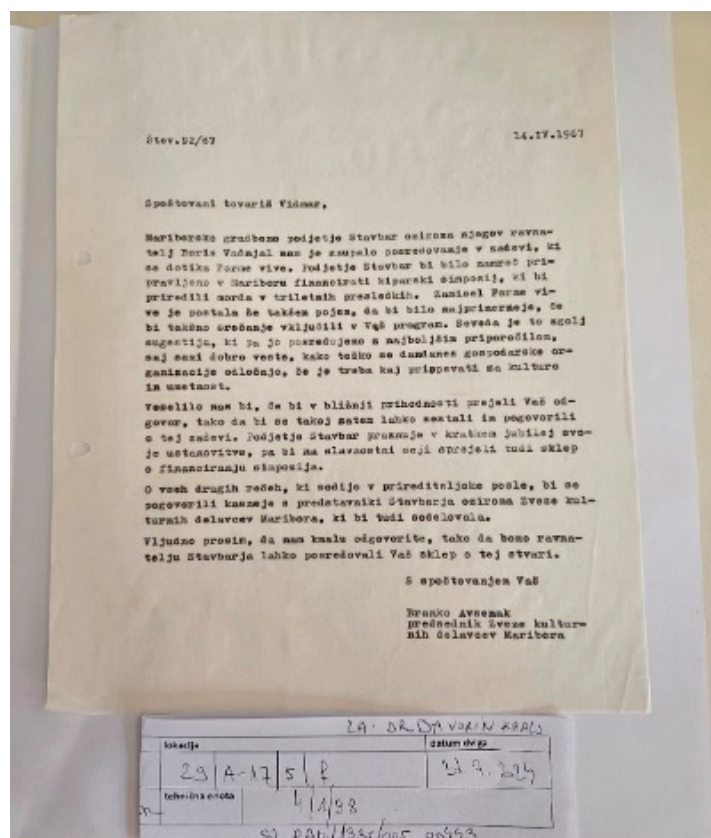
Cooperation between art and business is not a process that is naturally present in the business of all organisations, and therefore, when exploring art-business cooperation in the past, it is necessary to highlight the importance of taking into account the difference between a purely for-profit entrepreneurial orientation and those that favour artistic (co)operation.

### 4 RESULTS

Due to the size of the survey, I am only giving some partial results. A humanistic urban touch had to be introduced into the concrete masses of the dormitory settlements. The artists' sculptures were a unique opportunity. Art historian dr. "In the early spring of 1967, the management of the Stavbar construction company initiated an initiative to support financially and technically a sculpture symposium in concrete in Maribor; the Maribor builders proposed to organise the symposium every three years, starting as early as 1967, and to furnish the housing estates built by Stavbar with concrete sculptures" (Ciglencečki 2017, 17-18). Until then, the Maribor worksite had not yet been involved in the organisation of international sculpture symposia. As the chosen material for the

symposium in Maribor was concrete, and Stavbar was the contractor of a large-scale housing development, Stavbar took the initiative to work together on the installation of the concrete sculptures as part of the construction projects in order to ensure that the artwork would have enough visitors. In May, the board of directors of Forma Viva made the decision to make Maribor the fourth sculpture workplace as an associate member (Ciglencečki 2017, 17-18). Stavbar was the first Maribor construction company to support financially, technically and organisationally the creation of sculptures in concrete by national and international sculptors. At the same time, it supported and worked closely with the secretariat of Forma Viva in Ljubljana. A letter (Letter, 1967) from Branko Avsenak, President of the Association of Cultural Workers of Maribor, to Marjan Vidmar, Secretary of Forma Viva in Ljubljana, represented the first steps of a successful symposium in Maribor. The Social Agreement on the Organisation and Functioning of the International Sculptors' Symposium Forma viva, signed in 1974 (Social Agreement 1974), set out in 30 articles the way in which the International Sculptors' Symposium Forma viva would be organised and function. Three sculptors were selected for the work of the first meeting in Maribor, Takeshi Kudó, Tone Lapajne and Lino Tiné. Mag. Ivan Lorenčič (former headmaster of the Second Gymnasium from 1982 to 2021) recalls in an interview (Lorenčič, interview 2024) that the art teacher Vlasta Zorko came to the class one autumn day and told them that they were going to the opening of Forma Viva near the Second Gymnasium. Of course, none of them had any idea what Forma Viva was, and her explanation helped them on their subsequent visit. Forma viva in Maribor was opened by a sculpture by Japanese artist Takeshi Kudo, which they found particularly significant. The sculpture was viewed with interest from all sides, but not much was imagined. Nevertheless, the inauguration has stuck with him to this day, as he said in an interview on 14 June 2024 (Lorenčič, interview 2024).

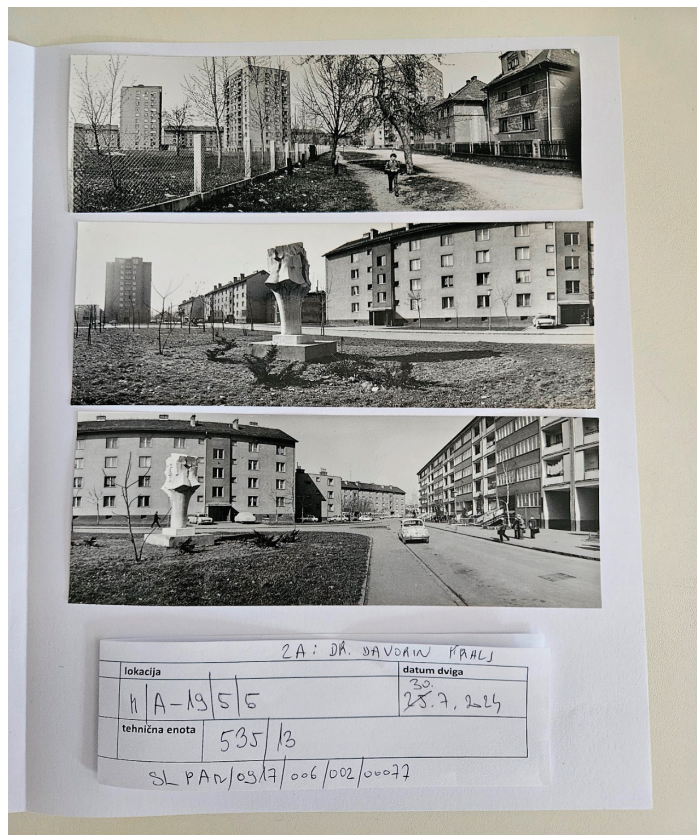
Figure 1: Letter from the Union of Cultural Workers of Maribor, 14 April 1967



(Source: Maribor Regional Archive. Stavbar 2011, AŠ 8LPAM I 1335/05-00443 2024)

Figure 2 shows a concrete sculpture, measuring 360 x 90 x 130 cm, by the Japanese artist Takeshi Kudo (1937-), entitled Conversation with the Wall, immediately after its installation in front of the Boomerang block in 7-9 Frankolovska Street. It was opened on 9 November 1967. It was the first concrete sculpture to be created as a result of the collaboration between the artist and the Stavbar company.

**Figure 2: Takeshi Kudó: Conversation with the Wall, immediately after installation in front of the Boomerang block in Frankolovska ulica 7-9, material concrete, dimensions 360 x 90 x 130 cm.**



(Source: Maribor Regional Archive. Fond Stavbar 2011, AŠ SL PAR 0917-006-002-00077 2024)

Figures 3 and 4 show the sculpture photographed on November 11, 2012, and July 22, 2024. I observed and photographed the sculpture over a twelve-year period to study the preservation of both the sculpture and the embedded concrete. The damage is more evident in Figure 7 than in Figure 6, where weathering and other effects on the sculpture and concrete are more visible. The sculpture is heavily marked with graffiti, small cracks in the concrete are visible, and the identification plate does not reveal the artist, nor does it indicate that the Stavbar company was involved in the execution. Figure 8 shows the condition of the concrete sculpture on July 22, 2024, after restoration. Unfortunately, the restoration of the concrete base of the sculpture was neglected. Despite all this, it must be acknowledged that Stavbar's technologists have designed a concrete that is perfectly able to withstand the effects of the environment.

**Figure 3: Forma Viva, Takeshi Kudó, 1967, Conversation with the Wall, Greenery in front of Frankolovska 7-9**



(Photo: Author, November 11, 2012)

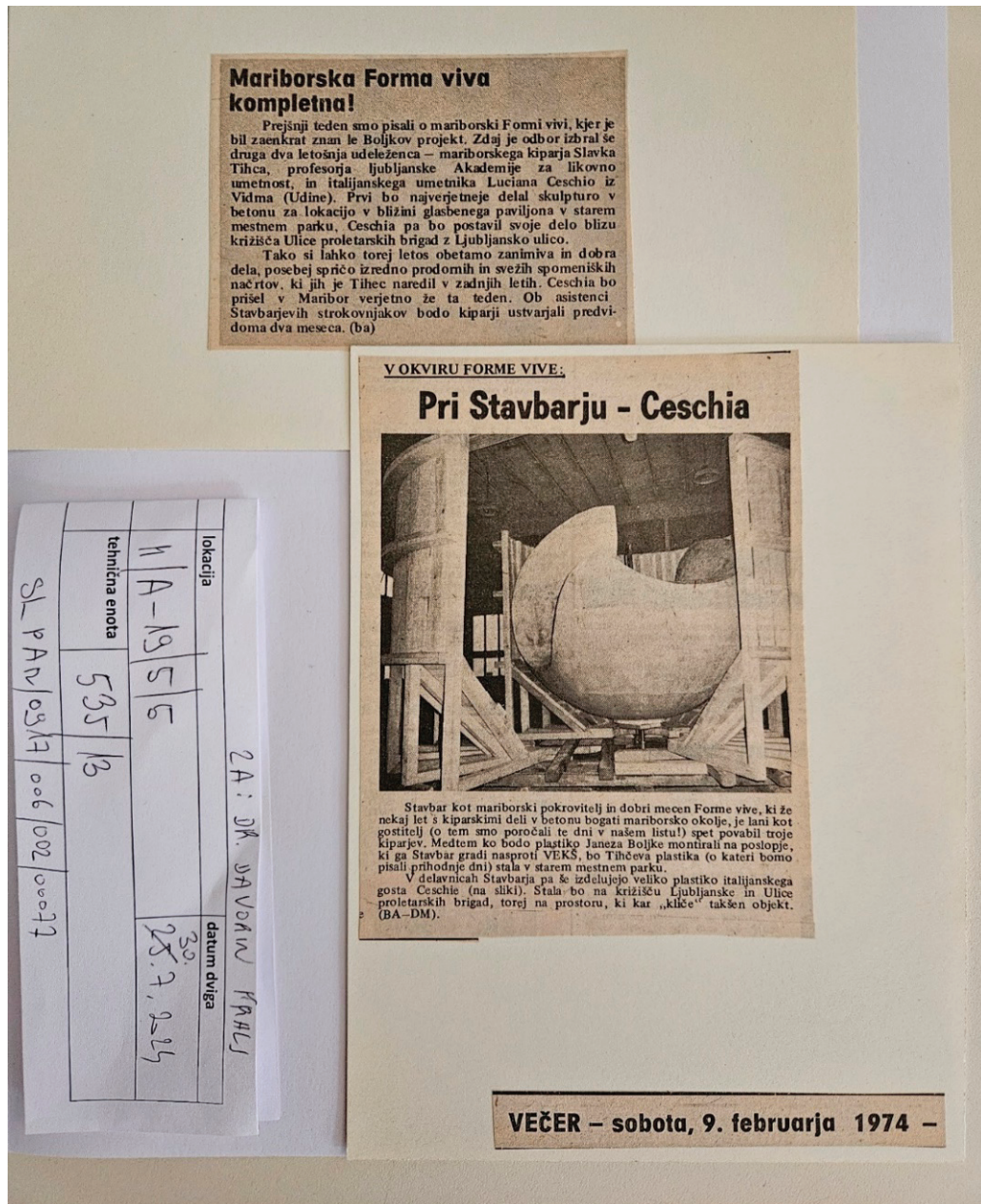
**Figure 4: Forma Viva, Takeshi Kudó, 1967, as at 22.7.2024 after restoration**



(Photo: Author, July 22, 2024)

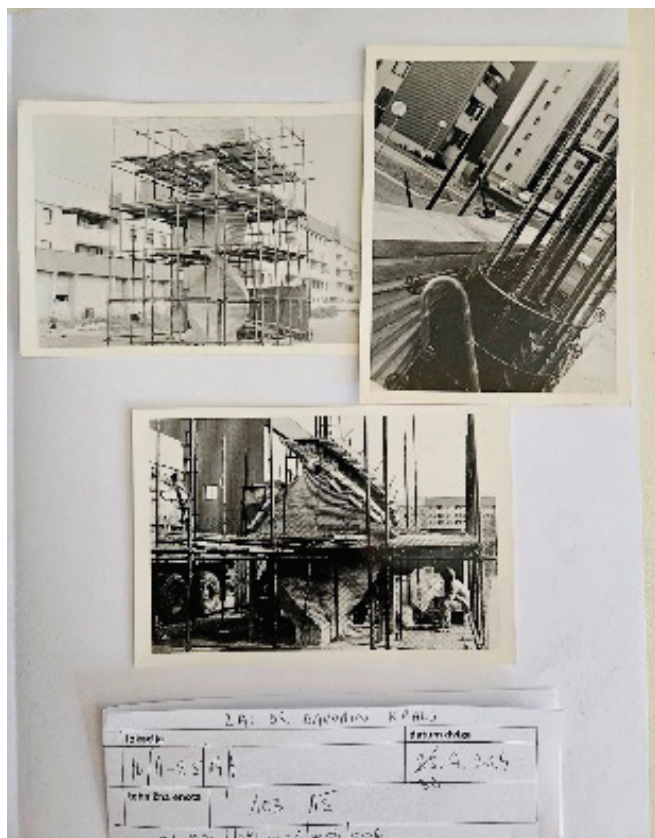
On 2 February 1974, the newspaper Večer published an article entitled "At the Builder's - Ceschia" about the events related to the international symposium of sculptors Forma viva in Maribor. Figure 5 shows Luciano Ceschia (1925-1991) in Stavbar's workshops, where his large sculptures were made. Other sculptures were similarly prepared in the workshops. Figures 5 and 16 show the preparatory work of Maciej Szańkowski (1938-) together with the Stavbar workers.

Figure 5: Forma viva, Luciano Ceschia, 1973



(Source: Pokrajinski arhiv Maribor. Fond Stavbar 2011, AŠ SL PAR 0917-006-002-00077 2024)

**Figure 6: Harunori Fujimoto: preparatory work in 1983 and installation of the sculpture Spiral on the site of Staneta Severja Street, Nova vas, material concrete, dimensions 1200 x 180 x 180 cm**



(Source: Pokrajinski arhiv Maribor. Fond Stavbar 2011, AŠ SL PAR 1086-001-0043-006 2024)

Stavbar published a newsletter, which, among other things, presented the achievements of its employees and others in the field of artistic activity. The article emphasises the interconnectedness of business and art, which is a fundamental feature of the Maribor Sculptors' Symposium. Without such an interconnection, it would not have been possible to create concrete art sculptures. In the 1983 issue of the newsletter No. 9, the concrete sculpture entitled *Spiral* by the Japanese artist Harunori Fujimoto is presented in Nova vas, in Staneta Severja Street. It is stressed that Stavbar was the initiator of this manifestation and that it is important to work for culture. The sculpture in Nova vas was the subject of the largest amount of photographic documentary material preserved by Stavbar. In an interview (Gradič, interview 2024) on 5 July 2024, university civil engineer Zdenko Gradič, head of the laboratory at Stavbar in 1983, said: „For the project of installing a sculpture called *Spiral* by the Japanese artist Harunori Fujimoto, I received a request from the university civil engineer Miroslav Temnik for liquid concrete that could be poured step by step into the formwork. Due to the complexity of the formwork, and in order to satisfy the author, attention was given to the gaps in the formwork, which had to be fully filled. Of course, with good strength and quality in the future lifetime. It was simply said that the concrete should be as flowing as possible. In this context, I designed the concrete recipe, which is given below (Table 1). The recipe takes into account the amount of surface-dry aggregate, so when the concrete is prepared, the moisture content must be subtracted from the total water“ (Gradič, interview 2024).

An online survey was also conducted. Basic information about the survey on the 1ka.arnes.si website is given in Table 1.

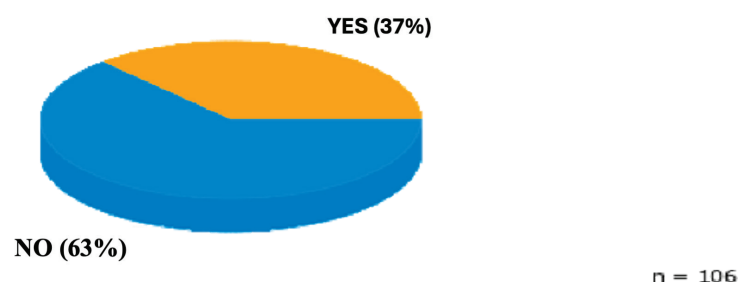
**Table 1: Final status of the survey 05.08.2024**

Metrics	Frequency
Completed survey (6) 105	105
Partially completed (5) 6	6
Total 111	<b>111</b>
Click on survey (4) 14	14
Click to address (3) 200	200
Total inadequate 214	<b>214</b>
Total surveyed 325	<b>325</b>
	325

(Source: 2024 survey questionnaire.)

Question 13 serves as an example. Descriptive statistics for Question 13 (Figure 7 and Table 2) address respondents' awareness of the Forma Viva sculpture symposium in Maribor.

**Figure 7: Descriptive statistics for Question 13 – awareness of the Forma Viva sculpture symposium in Maribor.**



(Source: Survey data, 2024)

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics for question 13**

Q13	Are you aware of the Forma viva sculpture symposium in Maribor?				
	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Valid	Cumulative
	1 (YES)	39	35%	37%	37%
	2 (NO)	67	60%	63%	100%
Valid	Total	106	95%	100%	
		Average	1,6	Std. deviation	0,5

(Source: Survey questionnaire, 2024)

Although 82 respondents or 75% associated the term Forma viva with art and 57 respondents or 52% with sculpture, only 39 respondents or 35% were aware of the Forma viva sculpture symposium in Maribor. It is possible that they recognised Forma viva from the symposia of sculptors held in Seča, Kostanjevica or Ravne na Koroškem. Table 2 gives the frequency of all valid responses.

## 5 DISCUSSION

The overall conclusion is that Forma Viva has established itself in the urban environment and has fully justified its reputation at home and internationally. The city fathers were aware of the need to place artistic sculptures in the enlarged working-class suburbs of Maribor, and they made sure that Forma Viva was invited to open a new worksite and, logically, to use the material that the employees of the STAVBAR construction company had proposed in 1967, namely concrete. The material, which has so far been the biggest challenge for everyone, proved to be a rewarding experience for

all the stakeholders of the manifestation. The stimulus was welcomed with open arms. The main characteristic of the Maribor open-air worksite is that in the creative (co)operation in the realisation of the artist's idea, there is a close involvement between the artist and the performers: the concreters, the technologists, the structural engineers learn from the sculptor, the adaptation is mutual and reciprocal. This kind of close collaboration is rarely present when the sculptor learns new technological processes from the construction experts, which leads in the end to the realisation of concrete forms that are even difficult to realise. Artists from all over the world, from all five continents, who have so far participated in the international sculpture symposia in Maribor, have proved that concrete, as one of the basic elements in construction, has become familiar to them and can be used for artistic achievements. Even at that time, they pointed out the lack of care in accessing basic information about the artist, title and year of the sculpture, as the placement of the appropriate markings is not timely or cost-effective. The care of cultural heritage is neglected and left to enthusiasts, which is still the case today.

## 6 CONCLUSION

From 1967 to 1986, Maribor enriched its urban space with concrete sculptures, the result of the strong construction industry in the former Yugoslavia and the idea of biennials, to which foreign and local sculptors were invited. A precious cultural treasure that the city of Maribor (from the worker to the intellectual, from the peasant to the bourgeois) does not show enough respect to. Sculptures by internationally renowned sculptors are losing their role and significance due to lack of attention and are in some places unrecognisable and partly abandoned by residents and visitors. Symbolically, the story of Maribor's concrete sculptures is a personal account of Maribor's relationship to public sculpture, with an intertwining narrative of the past of growing industrial development and the mass construction of suburban concrete dormitory estates, where creative collaborations between the construction industry and renowned national and international artists are taking place to soften the brutal encroachment on the environment. It was no coincidence that Maribor chose concrete, a material so important for the development of humanity, as one of the materials for the realisation of "living forms". The initiators of the promotion of concrete as a sculptural medium, which has been equally included in the Slovenian *Formo vivo*, were the workers of GP Stavbar in 1967. The encouragement was welcomed with open arms, certainly especially because it came directly from the united labour (Može 1983, 5). Thus Stavbar, as the first Maribor construction company, supports financially, technically and organisationally the creation of national and international sculptors in concrete. In the grey concrete of the time. Grey, crude and unfriendly to man, yet internationally open in (co)creation and (co)action, and in the multi- and inter-professional realisation of the artistic ideas of many stakeholders. The artists' sculptures were a unique opportunity to demonstrate their engineering skills, especially in construction and other various areas of expertise. Stavbar went bankrupt in 2011. Its memory has been preserved by the many buildings constructed and, of particular note, the *Forma vive* concrete sculptures by local and internationally renowned sculptors. In order to preserve this rich cultural heritage, more resources will have to be devoted to the care and maintenance of the concrete sculptures in the future. Concrete is a living material that needs careful care and maintenance. Perhaps a custodian should be appointed within the Municipality of Maribor to watch over this precious concrete treasure for future generations.

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## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY:

**Dr. Davorin Kralj**, scientist, artist and world traveller, was born in Maribor, received his first PhD in Chemical Engineering at the University of Maribor in 2009. Before that, he obtained his Master's degree at the Faculty of Organisational Sciences and the Faculty of Economics and Business, MBA, and his second PhD in 2012 at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Economics, in the field of management and organisation. His research work has been devoted to the study of environmental management from a managerial, technological and humanistic point of view. A multiple international award-winning innovator, including a gold medal from the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), he intertwines theoretical insights with everyday entrepreneurial practice. In recent years, his activities have focused on the humanities and the artistic side of creativity. He records his travels reflections in photography, words and small sculptures made of light concrete.

# OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS: FAMILIAL HERITAGE AND ITS SOCIETAL TRANSCENDENCE

Renata Šribar, PhD, Associate Professor  
Alma Mater Europaea University - Faculty of Humanities, Slovenia

## ABSTRACT

*The paper is based on a research study using a transdisciplinary approach, which is characteristic of contemporary memory studies. The introductory part thematizes the origins of this relatively new discipline, while embedding the topic of inherited occupational skills in the paid work sector on the one hand, and on the other hand articulating the research goal to transcend the state-of-the-art in scientific reflection on the familial heritage of professions by focusing on the inheritance of occupational skills for the societal benefits.*

*The two research questions and the related objectives combine two levels of inquiry: firstly, which skills are inherited and how they are transferred, and secondly, how they are generalized to be recognized, obtained, and used in the paid work sphere regardless of specific jobs and the related sectoral hierarchies. Methods are qualitative and humanities-related, the basic technique used being memory journaling. It was processed by combining diary writing and an autoethnographic memory journal. Besides the archive analyzed, the analytical tool to obtain the research results is a coding model, comprising the super-categories besides usual categories, sub-categories, and codes.*

*For each of the two objectives, the results are represented differently. The results related to the first objective are illustrated syntagmatically, so that the skills are named (category), defined by way of formation (subcategory), and described by way of the invested agency (code). The first objective is reached by sorting all categories and interpreting them. The results related to the second question are represented by a different model, a synthesis of the memory inscribed in a certain syntagmatic line. To achieve the second objective, supercategories are listed and then discussed according to the model of synthesised memories to evaluate their character and value, considering the work sector and life culture.*

**Keywords:** *inherited/transferred skills, autoethnographic memory journal, coding, super-categories, paid work sector*

Since it is autumn, the leaves will blaze into ashes with Jacques Derrida: *Let the daughters of educated men dance in a circle around the fire! Let them stoke the flames and throw withered leaves onto it, and let their mothers lean out from the highest windows and cry out: 'It burns! It burns!'* J. D., Fire Ashes

## 1 MEMORY STUDIES AND THE THEME SPECIFIC HOLISTIC APPROACH

### 1.1 Introduction: an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approach

The research study on the familial heritage of occupational skills<sup>1</sup> is based on an autoethnographic study, combining personal memories and recollections, as well as past and newly acquired knowledge of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary origin.

At the very beginning, it must be stated that memories of the past are usually accompanied by intense emotions, which are not identical to those of the original experience. The strong emotional input is especially the case when parents are involved. As reflected in Ernesto Sabato's essayistic remembrance of his mother's old age, it is about the pain of farewell again and again, consciousness, and the conclusive thought that love wins over evil (2011, 58, 71). To formulate it in the language of the research: memories are not stable as personal perspectives change with new experiences, awareness, and knowledge. They bring into existence something that has been absent, unfolding life with deeper understanding. According to Bergson, this continuum of memories of the past and the moments of remembering equates memory and awareness. (Bergson 1977 [1898], 156; Bergson in Wolf 2021, para 28) The holistic approach of Bergson's personalism is recognizable by the very naming of the theoretical framework of contemporary memory studies, the 'dynamic memory theory' (Wolf 2021, part III).

Amalia Călinescu locates the scientific benevolence to accept the 'holistic' and 'interdisciplinary' nature of memory studies in the contemporary 'beneficial liberalisation of academic and scientific boundaries' (2021, 41). On the other hand, the transdisciplinarity is related to the very origins of contemporary considerations of memory within the intersections of Freud's psychoanalysis, Durkheim's sociology, Bergson's philosophy, Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, Benjamin's philosophic conceptualizations of history and critical theory, Arnold Zweig's political writings, etc. (Erl 2008, 8).

Memory studies were considered interdisciplinary since their popularisation in the 80-ies of the last century (Brown 2009, 117). In the present research study, the interdisciplinary approach combines anthropology of everyday life, ethnography, socio-linguistics and semiotics, gender studies, social studies of families, and history didactics. The inclusion of a transdisciplinary approach is applied exclusively in the methodological part by intertwining the personal diary writing and ethnographic journaling.

### 1.2 Memory as a psychosocial phenomenon

Memory is a constitutive element of the individual and communal identities rooted in time and space. Memories are an integral part of life; they form everyday knowledge of people and their experiences, mundane and extraordinary. Besides, they co-constitute the interrelated individual and collective identities. Both levels constitute memory as a source of historiography, and the narratives based on memories are ontologically formative of history and historical anthropology. Yet the relation of individual remembering and recollecting, and collective memory is not simple. According to the North American philosopher Ross Poole, the individual memory is a kind of 'internal residue of the original event' which serves for 'the later recollection'. It is fallible by nature (Poole 2008). Consequently, it has to be compared to the collective narratives and embedded in an autoethnographic or (auto)biographic technique (Cowman 2012).

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1 The expressions professionalism and the adjective professional preceding the noun skill(s) are avoided according to the contemporary sociological critique, which implies that the work sector is dependent on managerial control: 'The [discursive] effects are not the occupational control of work by the practitioners but rather control by the organizational managers and supervisors.' (Encyclopaedia Britannica, entry 'professionalism', n. d.)

The interconnectedness of memory as the outcome of individual acts of remembering and recalling, and the formation of history, constitutes a continuum of collective and individual memory (Poole 2008, 152). Another dimension to be respected is the episteme of the 'spatial turn'. It has impacted the conceptualization of cultural memory and orally transmitted memory connected with landscape (Guldi 2012, 69). Memory is always spatialized, and by adding the category of time, it is situational in the localized present.

The contribution of history to the present research study on inherited skills is thematically specific, and it is applied sub-disciplinarily by the social history of the family. Considering temporality, I am reflecting on the seventies of the last century. The indicated period is significant because societal conditions of family life are defined by the transition from modernity to postmodernity/late modernity (Reckwitz 2023; Sieder 1998). Closely related are the studies of childhood, usually combining historical, sociopsychological, and educational research studies. Hereby, the stress is on a generational perspective (Wright 2020).

According to Reinhard Sieder, the cultural transition in the familial context is most specifically oriented towards the decomposition of traditional patriarchal family structures, which included the absent father, and newly engaged mothers in the labour market, i.e., in the public sphere. These two complementary phenomena lead to loosening of the familial paternal orientation while raising children became pedagogised (Sieder 19298, 76–278). Although in the private sphere gender roles were not liberally transformed, the option of women's economic autonomy, and the new instability of familial and parental roles of men, brought into existence the novel construction of childhood. Children became the pivot and guarantors of familial stability, whereby the plurality of possible family models became acceptable in the eighties of the last century; this was exactly at the beginning of the period when we, the people of the first generation of permissive upbringing, were ourselves becoming parents.

### 1.2.1 Autoethnographic insert and its humanities references

In the description of the study-related primary familial context, the first person is used, 'I', 'me', 'my'. The sociocultural conditions of my parents' age cohort co-determined their attitudes towards me. As far as I remember, I probably had more freedom compared to the majority of my peers, at least girls. My upbringing was pre-eminently ungendered. The parental practices from the viewpoint of maternal and paternal roles were not strict, mostly because I spent much more time with my father, who took responsibility for my breakfasts, informal and formal education, and the important parts of my school holidays. Although our family life was characterised by the individuality of each of us and personal freedoms, some daily and seasonal routines were ritualised.

According to anthropology, historic memory itself has the form of the ritual (2012, 215). When applied to the family history in the present work, it had two functions: during the memory journaling, I felt sad and cried, especially at moments when I was repeatedly repositioning my mother from emotional distance to the closeness of deep understanding. Another ritualisation carried out by the subtle care has been related to the familial artefacts – handwritten documents. Ruth M. Van Dyke while referring to Bergson, notes that 'materiality means our discipline does not lend itself easily to historical narration of linear time, but rather describes material intrusions of the past into the present.' (2019, 215) Emotions transform the rationality of remembering into a rhythmical flow of insights. While collecting the home archive resources, I found my mother's old notebook, and just one sentence I read there had completely changed my perspective on her attitude towards the system of science she, as a geologist, was part of. Lines written at the beginning of the nineties of the last century, and still valid more often than not: 'inadequacies of theory, scientific thinking / technological processes – false, fake science / influence of politics, the situatedness of science.'<sup>2</sup>

Narratology as a part of the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary memory studies is involved conceptually whereby the basic concepts are not always semiotically precise in usage: - to recall (*to bring back to mind, to remind one of*), - to remember (*to bring to mind or to think of again*), - to recol-

2 Ljudmila Pika Šribar, a personal notebook. First entry date in the booklet: May 21, 1991. Translated from the Slovenian language by R. Šribar.

lect (to bring back to the level of conscious awareness), - to remind (to put in mind of something, cause to remember), and - to forget (to lose the remembrance of, be unable to think of or to recollect).<sup>3</sup> Some expressions are used as synonyms, others are context-specific. The opposition of memory, forgetting is reminding us of psychoanalytical concepts: - suppression as voluntary act to suppress, producing suppressed or 'forgotten' contents which may be psychically harmful (Berlin and Koch 2009); - 'disavowal' as another defence mechanism which recognises the unpleasant reality, and the same time push it aside (Zupančič 2022, 90); - and 'denial' as neurotic defence mechanism, refusing to accept the painful reality. Rituals in remembering and recalling are personal and professional techniques for articulating the remembered and bringing the 'forgotten' into consciousness. According to narratology, the 'revived' realities are characterised by 'the selectivity and perspectivity inherent in the creation of the versions of the past according to present knowledge, and needs'. Memory as a part of cognitive processes is interrelated with social environments (Erll 2008, 5).

### 1.3 Re-subjectivation, and the scientific and societal aims of the study

By the inclusion of genealogy in memory studies, the subject of the research is being re-consolidated, which is reflected in the personal (self)identification: 'The genealogist scrutinises the living conditions of their ancestors, their occupations, and how these roles situated them within the social hierarchy. [...] The unique historical knowledge amassed in this process significantly influences the identity of those immersed in genealogical research.' (Parowicz 2024, 12)

During the incubation phase, I was spontaneously recalling my youth and primary family life. I was able to reconstitute myself by identifying who I was in the past and who I became. Additionally, I began to experience my existence differently; I considered, reconsidered, and reacted or did not react in various life and work situations in unexpected ways. I have changed.

Regarding the scientific contribution of the present research study in the field of memory studies, the point of departure is the thematisation of the familial inheritance of work-related skills; usually, it is occupation that is expected to be transferred. Further on, I consider the shifting of focus to be sensible from the perspective of social stratification. A job-related position in class and cultural strata is often inherited, which usually does not allow for socioeconomic mobility. When the occupational familial inheritance is included, 'clans', i.e., closed societal cycles, are unavoidable because of intra- and interfamilial occupational, political, and economic networking. The concentration of lobbyist power equals corruption. The importance of familial skills transfer empowers individuals by granting them personal freedom in educational and occupational choices. Consequently, there is an increase in socio-economic mobility, elaborated autonomy of life course options, and societal transparency of sociocultural and class structures.

### 1.4 Research questions and objectives

Respecting the validity of the research aims, two research questions and two respective objectives are formed. The first question is *Which skills were inherited and how they were transferred to me during my childhood and youth by the close involvement in my parents' professions?* It corresponds to the first objective. Objective 1 is the empirically supported thesis that the familial transfer of occupation-related skills is personally and professionally important regardless of the specific occupations I have chosen in my adult life. The second objective is defined as a showcase of occupation-related skills that may be transferred generationally (mostly from parents/carers to children) on a general level. It corresponds to the question *What is the general value of the specific model of personal integration of the occupation-related inherited skills?* Accordingly, the second question with a second objective associates inherited skills with professional work/occupation without any limitations regarding the specific work-related sector or job and professional status.

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3 Terms used regularly in everyday speech and in expert or scientific discourse alike are defined in accordance with the Merriam Webster Dictionary.

## 2 RESEARCH APPROACH, QUALITATIVE MIX METHODS, TECHNIQUES, AND TOOLS DEFINED AND APPLIED

### 2.1 Research framework and methodology

This study is the final product of a small-scale research project. The approach reflects this scale; it centres on an autoethnographic case study and applies methods from the humanities. Some elements of planning and quality control are 'translated' from engineering and project management. This was intentional, aiming to make the research steps visible, as such steps are often spontaneous in qualitative research work.

The basic composite method is autoethnography, which combines autobiographic writing and an ethnographic memory journal. Some other qualitative methods are applied in research and interpretation, primarily content analysis based on semiotics and sociolinguistics, experience/knowledge interactional analysis, and the taxonomy of ignorance analysis derived from philosophy, anthropology, and gender studies; besides, symbolic interactionism is used as a sociological and anthropological method. (Comp. Kordeš and Smrdu 2015, 27–28).

Research proceedings were divided into work phases, tasks, techniques, and tools.<sup>4</sup> Techniques refer to methodological approaches and data collection strategies, while tools are the instruments that facilitate gathering, analysing, and presenting information. Techniques used include: selecting literature for cabinet study; autoethnographic memory journaling; compiling and selecting archived information such as my father's work diaries from the 1950s, my mother's private diary from the early 1990s, and collegial in-memoriam texts or speeches for both parents; applying narratology by styling and invoking text; and applying quality control methods such as detailed referencing, monitoring cohesion and consistency with AI, and responding critically to peer-reviewers' feedback. Tools include: the work plan, discourse analysis, coding models, and a result-structuring matrix. Methods adapted from the STEM field (or MINT in Europe), such as scheduling and quality assurance, now clearly contribute to stability in humanities research. Interruptions and stagnations caused by personal issues, typical of autoethnography, were legitimized and subsequently incorporated into the work plan as a standard part (Cf. Pellerin and Perrier 2019, 2172).

### 2.2 Autoethnographic journal as the core source: structured cognitive and emotional work

I had been writing the journal from July 1 to July 13, 2025, and analysing it from August 2 to August 4, 2025, and again on September 21, 2025, to rearrange it structurally. The text, i.e., the primary source of this research study, is, as already indicated, a combination of two routines: a transparent and honest biographic diary with the memories of my primary family life until the beginning of my study years when I was eighteen years old, and the autoethnographic journaling, thematizing my attitudes, feelings, and even resubjection and self-identification processes. As I have been writing a diary for thirty-one years to the present moment, the feeling of being in two discourses at the same time during the writing is understandable. Although such an approach is theoretically a normative blend of established ethnographic research practices, there is a deviation in mostly unfocused remembering, which was led by free associations, incorporating a few psychoanalytical passages. Later, the textual corpus was partially reorganised to serve the aim.

I was handwriting in an A4 notebook so that my activity would resemble my private, intimate journaling. Research-wise, it is written in an "introspective narrative form" (McNicol 2018, 328), thematising multifaceted familial relations. I was aware of the accent on my parents' jobs, which was lived. The respective impacts on our lives were naturally integrated, together with the transfer of skills from my parents to me. In a way, it was instructive how my father became interested in my knowledge when I was in grammar school.

The existing narrative implies the past socio-cultural environments and my parents' job-related conditions. Partially, the writing has been in progress even in the coding phase, as some additional memory-based information and reflections were added.

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4 The applied concepts are determined by the recognition that the basic methodological concepts (methods/techniques/tasks) differ regarding definitions. It is obvious that they cannot be harmonised across disciplines.

### 2.3 Writing of the journal: interwoven work of associations and structuring

The autoethnographic memory journal was planned in advance by provisionally defining the numerous sub-categories, mostly with reference to the activities. They had been articulated with the aim to organise the complexity of the memories. During coding, the elements used to structure the material were reduced, and some were replaced by others to better interrelate.

The produced narration of the journal is time-space linear, and it follows the complex life course. Subsequently accentuated by different colours were those remembered and recalled events and family-life practices which could be clearly related to the inherited skills, my education, and occupational choices. Some recollected scenes have been unexpected, visually vivid, and emotional so that they may be considered as evocations. The feelings of sorrow and nostalgia inscribed in remembering my parents were accompanied by a thought that I should finally let them go in love and peace, leaving behind the sadness of loss, regrets, and unmanaged reproaches. The unforeseen effect of the journaling and the study itself caused what seemed to be procrastination. Yet in reality, it was often impossible to proceed without longer contemplative phases to process the 'finds' of remembering and recalling, and consider the impact of the memories.

## 3 CODING THE JOURNAL, AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC CONTEXTUALISED RESULTS, AND RESPECTIVE INTERPRETATIONS

### 3.1 The matrix

The first step of coding was the formation of the matrix – an open results coding mechanism in the intersection of the basic approach using themes, named "sub-categories" in Saldana (2016, para From codes to categories), then codes and categories (Mesec 2023, 115–117), and finally – for the sake of providing generalized results beyond those which are case specific – the super-categories (Mohr 2022, 6).

Several times during the coding, I had to ask myself some crucial questions about the family practices and their impact on the development of my skills, personal education, and professional choices. One of the most important impacts was the consequence of the fact that there was no strict division between our private family life and my parents' occupations. The most intriguing thing I have learnt while accompanying them at work is the importance of perspective. It is a primary epistemic concept, and at the same time, a technological issue, given that my parents' jobs integrated equipment.

The first moment I recognised as being intentional regarding transferable skills took on the nature of an imperative, "Observe!" From observing sea snails to observing people, their relationships, and finally, social structures and unjust attitudes in social and professional hierarchies. Learning by observation, then describing according to facts, and after that interpreting. And finally, teaching. I intuitively learned the procedures when accompanying my father at the excavation sites. In contemporary terminology, early teaching competence consisted of 'dissemination' of what I had seen and learnt. This tendency to 'disseminate knowledge' was conditioned by my childhood situation. I spent a lot of time at the extended family house on my mother's side when the parents were doing the fieldwork, or during holidays. Loved as the first child of the new generation, I was anyway aware that I was not in the 'first circle' of the extended family. Probably, I was the one closest to my grandmother of all, yet it did not help, given that she was quite isolated doing chores from early morning until the evening. I thought I had to 'help', be 'wise' for the extended family members to be wholly accepted. It had to be not only funny but also at least a bit annoying.

After coding and articulating it sensibly, the astonishing fact was crystallized. I, a researcher, found myself in my parents' profession, which was not my intention.

The inherited skills were initially applied at my first work in the field of advertising. Being employed there for six years, getting a high salary in the position of editor of advertising campaigns, I constantly had the feeling that I was in the wrong (work)place. I changed employment sphere and became a freelance publicist; I still worked in public communications for a while, while getting involved in feminist movements. Consequently, new knowledge on feminist epistemology was gathered. I decided to enrol in postgraduate studies so that my activist voice would be heard and my

brain fully engaged. The rest is more or less spontaneous transitioning between spheres, lecturing, researching, writing essays, organizing debates, or taking part in public events, still being an active citizen when innately urged to do so. What I was obviously trained for intentionally in my childhood came quite late, at the beginning of my forties.

Inherited skills, which are organised in the following coding matrix, are complementary to the skills that transformed into the features of my character. I cannot argue that they are always positive; they can be destructive, though. Autonomy, relative freedom in work choices, respect for the internal processing of work tasks, spontaneously prolonging the incubation phase, interpretative elaborations, work integrity in the sense of investing myself wholeheartedly in research and writing, all of these formative professional skills are self-destructive when confronted with contemporary values of competitiveness and hyper productivity. Besides, some of them could become hindrances in teamwork, career path, and basic professional survival.

### 3.2 From categories to super-categories, from individuality to communality

The coding template is representing paradigmatic and syntagmatic order by way of semantics. Skills are segmented into units by categories and super-categories. Below each categorical unit (integrating and relating sub-categories, codes, and super-categories), there is a category-related interpretation.

#### Category A: OBSERVATIONAL SKILL

→ Subcategory a) In the familial environment

- Code Time: family time, being together. Memory: *We travelled a lot. We knew how to amuse each other: I remember laughing loudly when watching TV burlesques with my dad. Occasionally, this also happened with my mum, moving the furniture in the exquisite absurd atmosphere of such deeds, being the effects of momentary whims. Sometimes, even when familial scenes were pleasant and authentic, there were moments of awkward awareness that we were unsure how living in the family should be organised – intense as the individuals, we were clueless in relation to the norms of standard family life. We liked to tease each other because of the oddities of our characters, all of us being loud and often quarrelling, it seemed normal for each of us to express individuality, love and annoyance. There were rituals of interconnectedness, such as goodnight, goodbye, and welcome kisses, sitting and talking together after meals, and cuddling on Sunday mornings in times before I became a teenager.*

- Code Emotions: parental marital emotional states, and the child's positioning. Memory: *I had the impression that when quarrelling, my parents fought for me separately. My mother and father sometimes spoke openly about their emotions regarding both private and professional relations. I somehow missed emotional autonomy as I was too emotionally involved in the parental world. From the present perspective, it is obvious that the emotional toll was too heavy for me as a child and an adolescent. To define it in psychological terms, such situations, although quite rare, were traumatic as I had the feeling of being torn between parents. I felt that I always gave priority to one parent over the other when discussing family issues with her/ him.*

- Code Nature: natural environments. Memory: *When on the seaside and during winter holidays, they praised my love for animals and supported my pleasures in nature. A lot of time was spent in nature, walking, in the fieldwork, and in the garden at home and at my grandparents' house. Once, when we were travelling in Germany, I remember passing beautiful fields on the side of the highway, and my father saying, 'Do observe, and tell us what you see.'*

*They thought I would study biology, and de facto, I pre-registered at the Biotechnical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana after my grammar school graduation. During the holidays, I was quite worried about how I would be able to dissect animals, and decided to study comparative literature.*

- Code Technology: understanding technology as a multifaceted tool. Memory: *I had the opportunity to see my father during planning, surveying the production process, and finally, using the A-tripod for high-altitude photography that he invented. I often went to my mother's workplace and observed fossils through a microscope.*

### → Subcategory b) Gender relations

- Code Occupation & family gender relations: job-related inequality, domestic inequality. Memory: *Only when my mother died, have I learnt by listening to her colleague giving in-memoriam speech, how successful she was professionally, her name being in the majority of the Slovenian geological maps; in the extended family it was always my father-archaeologist having the aura of professional importance, and the impact in the field of the Slovenian archaeology, and to a certain extent in the international archaeological network, as he organized international seminars and when retired worked for a few years in Italy.*

- Code Parents' professional gender relations: hierarchies. Memory: *I felt my mother's frustration as she was not in expert agreement on a certain geological fact with her colleague, an academician, who was quite aggressive and manipulative professionally. On the other hand, my father worked with a co-worker as her superior. She was the wife of my father's colleague, an archaeology professor. She was subjected to and even humiliated at home, and was also not satisfied at work because of the typical gender hierarchy at the workplace. It was somehow normal at the time that she, as a woman, could not afford to be absent from home weekly during the Summer, while it was normal for my father to do fieldwork from June to September. Yet as proof that my primary family was not wholly gender-standardised regarding professional opportunities, the fact is that my mother often participated in conferences abroad, had postgraduate education training in Italy, and when I was in the final two years of elementary school, she worked in Algeria for months. It should be emphasised that single women could professionally reach their best much more easily. I knew three women researchers, my mother's colleagues, geologists; they never married and were professionally dedicated. In the 1960s and 1970s, this fact stood out for two reasons: being single as a career woman.*

#### + Super-categories:

- the transferable skill to perceive circumstances
- the transferable skill of introspection
- the transferable skill of managing interpersonal relations
- the transferable skill of appreciating humour, and humorous distance
- balancing of private and professional life by observing gender relations

### Interpretation of observational skills

Although the skill to observe external conditions and internal participation in relations and situations is valuable in itself, it is also a precondition of some other skills. For instance, good private and professional relations, especially those that are challenging, are based on the quality of observation and introspection. The balance of private and professional life depends on the capacity to observe and recognise unjust gendered structures and systemic gender biases.

Consideration of humour might be perceived as being out of scope when thematising professional/occupational skills, yet it is a tool for distancing from unpleasant situations and re-interrelating people again.

Among the results of the coding and the related insights, one stood out on the phenomenological level. Not every skill was transferred directly to me by my parents. Problematic experiences of being occasionally torn between them had been processed for decades. The solution has come quite late in life. I found out that relational transparency, distancing, and decisiveness regarding personal integrity are functional tools to prevent unintentional, spontaneous hypocrisy because of the personal inclination to be kind and helpful to everybody, even in cases when I find myself beside adversaries in a specific work situation, so that the situation of my childhood was repeated with other persons. The relevance of this personal cognition is double-folded. First, as already stated, it shows that skills could be inherited as they are, i.e., directly, or are the indirect reverberation of the parental less skilled attitudes and behaviour. Parents or other carers are regarded as role models, yet they also serve as negative models, stimulating the child to do better than they themselves were able to do. It is not about being better – it is about having the opportunity to understand better psychosocial relations. The Slovenian academic and research sector has developed socio-psychological knowledge since the 1990s of the twentieth century.

**Category B: KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TRANSFER IN RELATION TO COMMUNICATION**

→ Subcategory a): The art of conversation and argumentation

- Code Rhetoric: argumentative, methodical, style-aware, two-way exchange of knowledge and opinions. Memory: *Nearly every day, immediately after lunch, we spent approximately one hour in discussions. Sometimes all three of us were at the table, yet usually, it was my father discussing with me in a relatively structured way. Although it was two-way communication, it was outstanding how my opinions seemed to be valuable. As my father's secondary education was classic grammar school, the transfer of rhetoric was spontaneous. I do not remember being given any explicit instructions.*

- Code Factual and visionary levels: informed, multi-thematic, creative/imaginative. Memory: *I recall discussion topics from history and culture to rituals, and from death to soul and cosmos. As topics were often related either to my father's work or my school subjects' knowledge, the level of the debates seemed serious and grounded in facts, although there were some speculations always present (e.g. guessing some realities of Christ's life, imagining unseen order in nature on micro level), and visions involved (e.g. future changes of the world order – prophesying the mega-power of China and Arabs, the future fate of Jews).*

- Code Conversational behaviour: teaching/learning oriented, intensive, confrontational. Memory: *Sometimes the discussions seemed like quarrels, and from time-to-time differentiated opinions led to quite brutal confrontations. The positioning of parent/child and teacher/learner was shattered by my adolescent insolence, which, a few times, led to my father's anger.*

*As previously stated, I was usually perceived as the one who knows things, too. This positioning was the result of my father's curiosity and the attention dedicated to minors and young people in general. It seems that my father managed the discussion time well, as I still have the impression that I was never frustrated regarding my opinions, knowledge obtained at school, and reading. There was always enough time for me. This discussion time was also a way to learn how to listen.*

→ Subcategory b) Reading and writing

- Code Learning to read daily by model and resources: reading a lot, having a family library in my room. Memory: *I was a typical bookworm, and my favourite genre was novels. I preferred dialogues over long baroque-like descriptions of nature. In grammar school, I began to read philosophy, Plato, Voltaire, Sartre. A passion for reading started when I was seven years old. During the holidays at my grandparents' house, I spent a lot of time in my grandfather's cabinet, where the journals such as Radar were kept – consisting of long articles, essays, and infotainment curiosities, and Reader's Digest, which I began to read when my English sufficed for a USA popular publication. The reading habit was sustained, yet it caused sleep deprivation. A positive side effect has been the ability to study at night without effort during student years and later on.*

- Code Honorary jobs and first training in expert writing: hired to describe historical artefacts for the National Museum of Slovenia, and asked by my father to write by dictation at the archaeological site. Memory: *After school, I went by bus to the museum, where I documented the excavated ceramics by drawing and describing the ornamented and plain pieces. It was better than the manual works a lot of my schoolmates did during the holidays. I was proud of my job while nurturing fantasies of low-paid jobs, washing dishes, and gardening. I compensated with a hobby, picking herbs and spices, and later on in life growing them, which was influenced by my grandmother and mother.*

- Code High expectations: receiving presents – the books with the contents aimed at grown-ups. Memory: *I cannot believe the type of readings I received as birthday, end-of-school-year, and New Year presents. The most outstanding were Jan Kott's Eseji o Shakespearu (Essays on Shakespeare), which I got when I was twelve years old, and the monumental novel Ulenspiegel, based on the legend of Til Ulenspiegel, written by Charles de Coster in the 19th century. It was a present for the end of the school year – I finished the second grade of elementary school, aged eight years. The majority of books I read in my childhood were published for adults. I had consumed all the books of the home library by the end of elementary school.*

+ Super-categories:

- transferable skill of expressing oneself discursively
- transferable skill of respectful interpersonal transfer of knowledge
- transferable skills of learning, listening, reading, and writing
- transferable skill of supporting the interests and talents of others

## Interpretation of knowledge and skills transfer in relation to communication

I consider training in discussions during my childhood and adolescence to be the basis of communication skill. It was professionally elaborated during my first years in public communications. Although our primary family discussions were thematically limited, they widened my cultural horizon and made me somehow aware of the mental and physical realities of another human being. I began to understand that a 'quarrel' need not be about violence as it could be about a difference of opinion, and as such, it might be interpersonally productive.

Communication skills should be the subject of systematic educational approaches and lifelong learning, as they are closely related to occupational and life situations. Communication skills are correlated with knowledge, as it is always transferred by speech or textually, either implicitly or explicitly. In the age of digitalised and AI-generated communications, reading and writing skills are culturally neglected.

Although communication is essential for knowledge transfer, it is also important for social, psychological, and physical well-being, self-awareness, and sublimation of destructive impulses and drives.

### Category C: WORK INTEGRITY SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

→ Subcategory a) Doing a job with honesty and transparency

- Code Authenticity: transparent self-positioning in the work environment and relations. Memory: *Both parents' jobs were professionally autonomous, and the results of their work were respected. The responsibilities and accountabilities were their own, so it seemed there was no reason to hide anything, manipulate, or use unscrupulous career enhancements.*

- Code Autonomy and occupational sovereignty: the importance of expertise, innovation, and interpretative consistency. Memory: *My mother's occupational expertise was characterized by being the only Slovenian expert in a micropaleontological research domain, i.e., Mesozoic Carbonate rocks. She was collecting the rock samples, sometimes courageously alone in the deep forests. Once, I accompanied her when she and her colleagues went to do fieldwork in the Slovenian virgin forest Rog. She showed me the bear track, and little-me was impressed. As many times before and after, I saw her as a woman of natural courage and drive to do what had to be done. Rarely did she showed off her intelligence, and she never spoke about her geological achievements. We, her closest, heard about that during the in-memoriam speech of her colleague. Her modesty was the reason she did not always insist on proving her interpretational truth if confronted with a certain aggressive colleague. My father was just the opposite, overtly self-confident as a researcher, and he had got most out of his occupation regarding his interests, postgraduate study in Wien and Bonn, engaging youth at the archaeological sites, buying and construing his own technical equipment, being awarded for technical innovation, hosting archaeological youth camps, as an expert tourist guide visiting several countries in the Far East, introducing High and Late Middle Ages archaeology in Slovenia, excavating two high profile archaeological sites, Otok Bled and Gutewerd – Otok pri Dobravi, constituting and leading the Centre for the Archaeology of the Middle Ages at the National Museum of Slovenia, even after retirement working in Italy. It was most characteristic of him when he had succeeded in surpassing the managerial hierarchy of the institution, being subordinate only to a director of the museum. He still believed he was not adequately understood. This was the dark side of his occupational autonomy. Long after his death in 1996, the ex-lead of the Department of Archaeology at the National Museum expressed his opinion that my father was not properly understood, indeed. It seems that his archaeological intersectoral positionings were unfamiliar before the end of the century. In my opinion, he was atypical from the viewpoint of his technical endeavours. Several other engagements outside the institutional symbolic and substantial practices of the time were not commonly accepted, either.*

→ Subcategory b): complex professional self-fulfilment and occupational and personal integrity

Code Self-discipline and flexibility: equilibrium between regulations and freedom, ingenuity and resourcefulness. Memory: *My first job at my father's archaeological site (Kortina, Pridvor – now Sv. Anton) should teach me 'order and discipline'. I suppose I was fifteen or sixteen years old, and one day my father did not wake me up for work as usual. I was late and he scolded me as soon as I arrived at the site, just a few steps from the farmhouse where we slept. It did not help because I perceived his work as very liberal regarding time, punctuality, and freedom in organisational duties.*

- Code Work love: checking the opportunities for work satisfaction, care for the subjective quality of the interpersonal relations at work, respecting the psychosomatic limits and boundaries of the self, and the others. Memory: *I loved the idea of perspectives, reflected so differently in the respective professions of my parents: my mother had to observe samples closely through a microscope, my father checked the site from high above by a special tripod. Besides, it was so traditional, considering gender roles, yet lovable: my mother inquired into nature, my father into culture.*

- Code Culture and nature: understanding different cultures on diversified levels, work-related and beyond. Memory: *Traveling to Egypt with my father at fifteen greatly broadened my understanding, and my self-awareness became stronger. It was clear to me that I had much better life opportunities than the people we met there. From the standpoint of acculturation and home education, I was fortunate, especially considering that I was able to travel abroad from a socialist country. With both of my parents working in professions typically associated with fieldwork, and living near the landscape park of Ljubljana, I spent many days immersed in nature, not just during holidays. As a result, my earliest memories are deeply connected to the natural world, whether enjoying it or exploring it as much as I could. Unusually for a child, I recall what felt like an initiation into a pantheistic worldview. This memory still helps me deal with adverse feelings in professional and private situations.*

- Code Intergenerational support: networking and socialising at the workplace and beyond, two-way transfer of skills, sharing the perceptions of interrelations with the aim to improve them, sharing resources. Memory: *Today, I read the text on the adaptation to social communities, and it was easy to apply it to my primary family. Professional work and the related educational level, cultural strata, and the matrices of everyday life, closely related to my parents' professions, were the strongest common denominators of my primary family. The gains I obtained in this intersection of private and professional domains helped me to feel comfortable in professional environments, and networking regardless of sectoral hierarchies, age, status differences, and disciplines. On the other hand, I became extremely sensitive to the abuse of power and sectoral privileges, normalisation of unethical attitudes, and ignorance regarding research integrity.*

+ Super-categories:

- skill of occupational integration (skill of integrating profession in life)
- skill of doing the situational best
- skill of psychical advancement (subjectivation for the sake of one's own integrity)

### Interpretation of work integrity skills and attitudes

A review of the work integrity related skills clearly shows that all the defined codes (honesty and transparency, authenticity, autonomy and sovereignty, attitude towards culture and nature, and intergenerational support) could be integrated into the development of a future national codex of ethical science and research integrity. To put the listed codes in practice needs to be recognised as a daily challenge: how to do work that is characterised by uncertainties of employment/contracts, often unscrupulous competition, and exhausting work conditions, with a holistic personality and coherence of character. Personal investment is crucial for ethics in science and research integrity, since governing it from the top of the sectoral management does not bring results. When I presented a short lecture on ethical science and research integrity to the Promotion Committee at University Ljubljana, one of the members perceived my research attitude as premodern. This was the most transparent symptom of the state-of-affairs related to ethics in science. A partial conclusion would be that individual investment in morals is momentarily the only way to do ethical science with integrity.

## 4 DISCUSSION: SOCIAL STRUCTURE, CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS, AND INDIVIDUAL CHOICES

The first research question *Which skills have been inherited and how were they transferred to me during my childhood and youth by the close involvement in my parents' professions?* is answered in three sections organised according to the categories 'observational skills', 'communication skills', and 'work integrity skills'. To illustrate the principle, each section is illustrated by a syntagmatic, i.e. horizontal axis as shown schematically.

Category 'observation': a skill of being together was cultivated in the familial environment (subcategory), e.g., while traveling, and it was based on time management (code).

Category 'communication': a skill ('art') of articulation (subcategory) is in rhetoric (code).

Category 'integrity': working with honesty, and transparency of the work tasks (subcategory), by way of authenticity (code).

The answer to the second question *What is the general value of the specific model of the personal internalisation of the occupation-related inherited skills* is by example as follows:

Category 'observation', subcategory 'familial environment', code 'emotions', memory: *I had the impression that when quarrelling, parents fought for me separately. My mother and father spoke of their emotions in both private and professional affairs, yet I missed emotional autonomy as I was too emotionally involved in the parental world.* Model: problem (competition) solving by deconstructing the competition. Interpretation: skills may be transferred directly or indirectly.

According to the findings of my research, which relied primarily on autoethnographic memory journaling, my early family life was marked by both complexity in parental influence and prosperous connection to my parents' professions. Reviewing the results, I recognize that my father's informal pedagogical approach was highly intentional in cultivating skills that would be valuable for my future professional life.

The first category, 'observational skills,' is revealing regarding the restructuring of family life from the perspective of the father's role in the family. According to Reinhard Sieder, and his thesis of the 'sharp reflection of the fatherhood' as part of the cultural re-evaluation of the father-child relation in the nineties of the last century (1998, 279), my father was ahead of his time, thirty to twenty years, given I am of the baby-boom generation. His time dedicated to me was extraordinary, and as our home was open to my schoolmates, they received his attention, too, especially when bringing us together to excavations of Gutenwerd for fourteen days of official grammar school practice, and again after graduation two years later. It may not be fair to ascertain that his parental engagement could be regarded as compensation for his work absences. Until the end of elementary school, I had spent a lot of time with him in the fieldwork. Yet the family was in a way dysfunctional due to the nature of my parents' professions, and the related discontinuities of family life. Besides, in the 1950s and 1960s, many families with baby boomers shared the same quite unfortunate fate. Parents trying to improve the living standards of their families engaged grandparents to substitute for their absence. This was also the case with parents whose jobs did not include the fieldwork. Consequently, family ties weakened as kids were weaned in early childhood. Later investments of middle-class families in time and money, informal education, and cultivation of children were actually structural compensations: holidays, travelling, cultural consumption, and historical thinking developed during historical sightseeing and reading (Reckwitz 2023, 117). These were the new realities of the 1970s, even in Slovenia as a part of ex-socialist Yugoslavia.

As regards another issue in the 'observational skill category', gender relations were transformed already in the generation of parents of baby boomers. The majority of women were employed in the adequate period of their life course. Together with their spouses, they had been 'bread-winners' and eager to provide for the family with consumerist goods. Yet as indicated by the results, gender inequality persisted, given that positions in professional hierarchies were gendered. Besides, emotional and care investments at home were, in most cases, also women's burden.

The relations included in the 'communication category' reflect the emergence of permissive upbringing during the influential decades of the 1960s and 1970s, characterized by student protests and flourishing youth culture. Not only did children and adolescents obtain the right to think and to articulate their opinions, youth became a cult, and according to a slogan, the future of parents became dependent on them. The described positioning affected my family and adolescent me. I was stubborn, critical, and uninhibited in expressing opinions, yet on the other hand, very loving towards parents, and together with them nurturing the specific rituals of closeness. Again, like in the 'observational category', I was able to enjoy and profit from my parents' care, and distinctively from my father's attention regarding my personality development.

The last category, 'work integrity as skill and attitude,' is complex in relating skills to the development of my character, ethics, and morals, and the fundamentals of our family life. I always consider us as strong individuals brought together by genetic fate, and kept in the intimacy of our home by rather unusual family ties. Above all, it was love for work, creativity, freedom to be what you are in spite of mutual pressures to submit to the 'proper' and 'regular' family life. Even now, when I think of my

deceased parents, what I cherish most are the peculiarities of their characters, the tolerance they were able to grant me and others. Their identity in my mind is always doubled: mother-geologist, associated with samples of stones comprising fossils / father-archaeologist, specifically associated with a skeleton from the excavation in the church on the Blejski otok, middle-ages historic remains, and numerous pieces of minor historic artefacts. It is somehow strange to be born and raised in the intersection of 'feminine' nature and 'masculine' culture, especially as, in my perception, my mother was somehow suitably wild. She was loud, with an impressive presence. When sad, she was associated with severe isolation. She despised fake personalities, keeping her innermost emotions in; when in a good mood, her joy was overwhelming. I recall dreaming a few times of a bear, and when awake, thinking it was her, transformed into the majestic brown-furred animal from the land of my dreams. Beside her, there is my cultivated father, being marked by patriarchy yet caring and subtle in his perceptions, loved by children and young people, balanced, intense either by sadness and rare angry outbursts or by pleasure and sensitised attention. I will never cease to be their educational 'product' and to an equal degree a self-made 'instance' based in their corporeality, love, and ignorance – it is all the same as long as there is consciousness of co-existence, ex-substantial and now-ethereal. Paradoxes – yes, also involved in every culture, civilization, and our joint research sectoral work.

## 5 CONCLUSION: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PARTICULAR TO THE SOCIETAL

The derived intra-textual hypothesis is that occupation-related skills indicated in the register of super-categories, and derived from generalisation of the categories, are important for all occupations regardless of job status. It has to be approved by some future research. For now, there is a summary of relations between categories and super-categories, supported by the argumentation on the societal power and social sensitivity of the exposed super-categories.

The category of observational skills is generalised into super-categories of transferable skills: the most important are the skill to perceive external circumstances, and the skill of introspection. The subjectivation process cannot be wholesome if the instance of observation is devoid of the ability to perceive itself in the context of social, cultural, and natural environments. A human being without the skill of such realistic self-contextualisation is marked by one or more social disadvantages. A skill to perceive and simultaneously analytically and constructively interpret external circumstances is psychosomatically health related. At every workplace, these are the basics of an embedded, safe, and cooperative institutional culture. The skill to perceive and adequately interpret external circumstances is the counterpart of the skill of introspection. External circumstances resonate internally, and self-reflectivity impacts situations and the environment.

The category of communication forms the foundation for skills-related super-categories, with particular emphasis on the ability to express oneself discursively and the capacity to show respect in interpersonal interactions. Again, these skills are transferable, and the first skill, of articulated introspection, is outstandingly complex. As not all jobs demand good communication skills, and as some people are introverts or even diagnosed, it would be better not to prioritize verbal competencies on every job-related occasion. The channels of self-expression and relating to others are numerous. Discourse is not limited to aural/textual expressions. Discursive is any act, process, or arrangement that mediates meaning understood by the receiving party.

The category of work integrity is generalised into three super-categories: the skill for occupational integration aims at understanding a job as a complex, time-consuming agency that cannot be separated from life, and is not reduced to an exhausting money-making routine. Regardless of status and job-related issues, paid work brings more satisfaction if it is done with responsibility and in accordance with the practices of personal growth and development across all aspects of life which support and maintain one's own integrity. Among other purposes, the workplace serves to foster the development of individual competencies and occupational career aspirations, while also respecting the personal circumstances of employees and external collaborators.

These super-categories are not only work-related skills but are also life skills; when appropriately adapted they become a complementary part of culturally important 'everyday knowledge' (Ule 2001, 73, 105). At the workplace, as stated, they have the potential to change the institutional culture and the professional environments.

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## **AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY**

**Renata Šribar** is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Alma Mater Europaea University. Her main research topics are gender relations, transformative autoethnography, and governmentality.

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