PUBLICLY INTIMATE:

CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE

POST-SOCIALIST PUBLIC SPHERE IN BUDAPEST

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Abstract

This thesis reviews the relationship between two grand dichotomies of "public" and "private", looking at the contemporary changes of public sphere induced by the expansion of public displays of intimacies. The research is illustrated by the case study of Budapest, as the city particularized by its historical, political, and social contexts during the past fifty years. The evidence is provided by the comparison of the social representations of the public and private sphere of the three generations and observations of everyday life in public places. Moreover, despite the existing theoretical tradition emphasizing the contemporary decline of public sphere in western societies, I argue that in case of Budapest it went through the process of transformation from the "private" integrated in public life to the state of the public sphere being fragmented by "private". Therefore, as the outcome of the study, I present my vision of the changes in Budapest with the model of fragmented public sphere.

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Introduction

On the 14th of August, 2007 the world record of the highest number of simultaneously kissing couples was added to the Guinness Book of World Records[1]. The place which welcomed the event was the city of Budapest. As for me, the fact that it happened there is not without a reason. Indeed, this episode reflects my impression of Budapest as a city of people who openly demonstrate their inner feelings of love and affection in public. Shocking to the foreigners as it might be, such an attitude implies much more than just an amusing phenomenon. Even more, I argue that it indicates a particular transformation of the contemporary public sphere caused by permeation of the elements of private life into it.

The character of this reconfiguration is unique due to a number of reasons. Although at first sight this change of public sphere may appear as a part of the more global trend occurring in the contemporary western capitalist societies (Bauman 2000; Sennett 1993), yet Budapest is rather an example of post-socialist society (Bodnár 2001). And thus, the models which analyze this alteration may not be fully relevant for the description or explanation of it owing to the different former political and social contexts. At the same time, Budapest is very unlike many other post-socialist cities in the sense of public displays of intimacies. Being generally perceived as a symbol of the freedom and liberation received after the collapse of the system, very open public expressions of love still make up quite controversial indicator of that. On the one hand, as the research reveals, they had taken place in Budapest even before the 1990s. On the other hand, comparing the state of things in this respect, for instance, with the Ukrainian post-soviet reality which I had experienced myself, it becomes clear that evidently it is not

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[1]Budapest Daily Photos. Retrieved May 15, 2009
(http://www.budapestdailyphoto.com/index.php/2007/08/15/simultaneous-kissing-record-7-451-couples/)

only about liberation. Although people in Kyiv are quite liberal in what they allow others to see, they are more confined than inhabitants of Budapest.

Although, some social philosophers of postmodernity are fairly pessimistic in their contemplations about the transformation of the public sphere, predicting its great decline and even total disappearance (Bauman 1993; 2000; Sennett 1993), in contradictions to this critique, I argue that the public sphere is not declining, but transforming and restructuring, namely, is simply adjusting to new ideologies and social conditions.

The aim of this thesis is to grasp the character of the dynamic character over the last fifty years in Budapest by studying public displays of intimacies. Consequently, I develop a model that would describe metamorphosis of public sphere in the more appropriate way. The whole idea is to reconstruct social representations of the public and private sphere of three generations of the Budapest residents studying their patterns of everyday of public behavior. This is done from two perspectives: their own perception of public and private and the observed evidence. I think the idea of understanding public sphere of the city through the everyday life experiences fits the objectives of the research in the best way, since it is not dealing with controversial abstract notions of public and private, but rather formulates it from the actual thoughts and behaviors of people who constitute the public life of the city as such. Eventually, having constructed the social representations of the public sphere of three generations, when the whole picture is clear, the relevant model of the change is built. Showing the process of transformation from the state of integration of public and private during socialist times to the state of fragmented public sphere nowadays, the model is compared with other models in the field describing changes of public sphere.

In order to achieve this goal, methodologically I followed the interpretative paradigm and conducted interviews with the inhabitants of Budapest of different ages. In addition, I carried out full-day observations on the four sites – public and semi-public/private spaces of Budapest, observing public expressions of intimate feelings.

Proceeding with the presentation of my study, in the first chapter I will position my intervention within the theoretical framework of the research, both conceptually and methodologically. The current debates on the "public" and "private" as analytical categories and ideas of the public and private sphere will be discussed, as well as the idea of public sphere reconfiguration. Furthermore, the methodology will be clarified. The second chapter will put forward the conducted fieldwork and describe the findings according to the three basic categories: public intimacies, transformation of the public sphere, and perception of private and public sphere. Finally, the analysis of the gathered information in the form of construction of social representations of three generations and application of the model of public sphere transformation will be offered in the third chapter.

1. Theoretical and Methodological Aspects of the Public Sphere Study

1.1. Grand Dichotomy of "Public" and "Private"

The concepts of "public" and "private" have been central to the contemporary social theory. The discussion goes far beyond the field of sociology or social anthropology into the broader context of the social sciences and political philosophy. Thus, there is no strict and unanimous understanding of the commonly used terms generally referred to as "public" and "private". However, some authors suggest that a wide range of private/public related issues should be differentiated. I think the work of Sheller and Urry (2003) offers helpful analytical advice pointing out to the common usage of categories "private" and "public" by scholars, classifying them as concepts of public and private interest, public and private space, public and private life, public and private sphere, and publicity and privacy as such[2].

I built my research around three of these conceptual pairs: public and private space, public and private sphere, and, finally, public and private life. I suggest these notions represent three dimensions of my research. The first one corresponds with the space and presents the material level, the basic physical setting, the place. The second pair expresses abstract concept of the macro-level theorizing, to some extent philosophical understanding of the public/private sphere division. At the same time, the third pair, public and private life, ties them both together, by embodying theory and fulfilling the place with particular social experiences of it.

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[2] The notion of public/private interest refers to the state-determined legal boundaries and procedural rules; private /public sphere – civil-associational ties and boundaries; public/private life – social-relational networks; public/private space – physical and symbolic marking of special boundaries; publicity/privacy mass-mediated exposure. (Sheller and Urry 2003:110).

1.1.1. Public Sphere

The public sphere in social sciences is very often defined to an extent in a political sense. Many scholars conceptualize the notion through the idea of open public discussion, participation and civic engagements, relations of state and society (Alexander 2006; Benn and Gaus 1983a; Calhoun 1997; Dahlberg 2005; Fraser 1990; Goodman 1992; Habermas 1992; Knox and Taylor 1995; Passerin d'Entreves and Vogel 2000; Weintraub 1997). The same tradition is maintained when public sphere is described as an arena for the expression of different opinions and place of public discourses. This is fully demonstrated, for instance, in gender related literature (Fraser 1992; Lichterman 1999; Rabinovitch 2001) or in the articles that treat media as a form of public sphere (Brooks Gardner 1988; Dahlgren and Sparks; Koopmans 2004; Oliver and Myers 1999; Wasburn 1995). And although the political dimension is inevitable part of public sphere, I see more sense in Bauman's (2000:96) distinction of civil sphere and public sphere, where the first refers to the political participation issues, and second to the social interactions of people in public. Thus, as my research is focused on the later, I will work with the second concept.

As a common trend, I noted, due to the relative universality of the public sphere concept, many authors treat it in the more specific contexts, spotlighting certain dimensions according to their research objectives, like economic (Post 1996) or religious (Salvatore 2007). However, the concept of public sphere is central as such for my research, hence, I tend not to focus specifically on any of the dimensions, while generally making a reference to the public institutions and defining it more through the opposition to the private sphere of home and family relations.

1.1.2. Public Space

The subject of public and private spaces is also greatly discussed, though, mostly in a more specific field of urban anthropology and sociology. However, the definition of the public space is not less complicated, as it integrates variety of approaches and different views. According to Bauman (2000:96) two major traits of the public space are, firstly, actual space people may share as public persons and, secondly, being a common good that could not be eliminated to the individual needs only. Having conducted study on the concept of the public spaces Staeheli and Mitchel (2007:792-7) figured that three most popular definitions of the public space are: firstly, physical explanation through streets, parks, squares; secondly, meeting place or place of interaction; and, thirdly, sites of negotiations and discussions. Hence, they argue that contemporary reality raises questions that do not allow any more relate public space only to the open and accessible space. I think public displays of intimacy is one of such questions, and in fact, the variety of public spaces inspires different degrees of these displays.

Another interesting attempt to overcome traditional dichotomy of private and public is introduced by the concept of "third place" where both elements of private and public may be combined (Oldenburg and Brissett 1982). And even though, the authors of the concept meant the realm which simultaneously does not belong to the work and home environments, I find its general logic useful in applying to the idea of semi-public/private spaces which may suggest different patterns of public behavior.

At the same time, I strongly agree with those authors who insist on the importance of the idea that except for the physical dimension, public spaces always have social and cultural layers (Carmona et al. 2003; Low 2000; Low and Lawrence-Zúñiga 2003; Staeheli and Mitchel

2007). Moreover, Lefebvre (1991) stresses the Marxian idea that public space is a social product. According to the Madanipour, such a dichotomous organization of space which results in the public/private distinction gives an idea of one of the most crucial dimensions of social organization of the city. Further he argues that one of the most notable characteristics of the city is that it is social world, and not only physical space. Therefore, individuals experience city not only physically, but what is more important – socially (Madanipour 2003:2-4). In context of my research, simply architectural forms and geographical places have little interest without the social fulfillment, the actual interactions between people and patterns of their behavior. Therefore, since public space is remarkably significant for the conduction of public life (Goheen 1998:479), further I will elaborate more on this concept.

1.1.3. Public Life

Somewhat simplified, public life may be described as the activities that are not to be hidden and, indeed, are displayed publicly (Arendt 1959:73). Again, I stress that often public life is defined through the opposition to the private life, and activities that it represents. As Benn and Gaus (1983b:5) imply, such opposition of private and public life sets the conceptual framework which organizes actions in social environment. Nevertheless, another approach, suggested by Lofland (1998:10-1) transcends this opposition and reveals three types of city life: public, parochial, and private. Still, in my opinion, parochial life deserves to be called rather a form of public life than represent a separate domain, and thus, is not included as a category of my analysis.

Interestingly enough, many scholars underline special importance of the public life in the urban environment. Thus, Lofland (1985) argues that the public life in the city is built up around constant interactions with strangers. At the same time, Bauman (2000:95) states that

meeting strangers, as a characteristic of the city, offers the whole range of the events without past or future, and, hence, shapes public life in a very specific way. Some note that modern urbanism as such is defined by the presence of public life (Goheen 1998:480), other remark that public/private division is the greatest determinant of the city life (Leibovich, Kabatskov, and Shushkova 2004:91). I think this underlined by many scholars significance of the urban context and interactions with strangers, are one of the key factors which makes public displays of intimacy possible at all, especially taking into account the scope of the contemporary cities.

1.1.4. "Public" and "Private" as Analytical Categories

Overall, "public" and "private" is a pair of basic, but complex analytical categories with many layers and dimensions. However, I strongly support the point made by Benn and Gaus (1983b:25) that their universality is true to an extent only for the western liberal societies and there are many societies around the world where all the assumptions about it would not justify themselves . Moreover, many researchers raise the question of the nature of relations between these notions. In other words, they discuss whether these two are dichotomy and make up the pair of the opposite concepts, or rather they represent a continuum (Blomley 2005; Lofland 1989; Madanipour 2003; Passerin d'Entreves and Vogel 2000). Taking into consideration their arguments I suggest that relation between "public" and "private" is of the dialectical kind. And although, these are often defined through an opposition of one to another as analytical concepts, practical aspects of the real world evidence many cases of them being a continuum and constructing a system of the whole. As one may see, ambiguity of the private/public understanding does not allow to eliminate it to one of the presented above notions of public/private sphere, public/private space, or private/public life. Therefore, in terms of my research, they all constitute one integrated characteristic of social life of the city.

There are several theoretical traditions of approaching "public" and "private" suggested by Bailey (2000:387-9). The first one was the Frankfurt School, concerned with power relations, and, thus, perceiving public life as a sphere of participation and communication, whereas private as a sphere of conformity and passivity. Vivid examples of this vision are presented in the works of Marcuse, Adorno, and Habermas. The second is psychoanalytical tradition, which examines how private selves are repressed by public world of social organization, and is represented by Craib, Richards, Rustin, Samuels, Alford, Kremmer, and Roberts. The third school is Foucauldian, which focuses on how private experiences reflect and incorporate the power. The fourth tradition is feminism and it is marked by the works of Pateman, Walby, Davidoff and others. Within this framework oppression and injustice are ascribed to the private home, while emancipation and discussion to the public sphere. Finally, the fifth tradition is introduced by the concept everyday life, developed in the works of Goffman and de Certeau. Within this approach the public and private is constructed by everyday-life practices of ordinary people. For instance, De Certeau clearly highlights the idea that everyday practices in the city are not simply the backgrounds of social activity, but the combinations of powers (de Certeau 1984:xi). This approach is of my particular interest, as it corresponds the most with my theoretical views on the city life, as well, as suits the topic of the research, and I will elaborate on that point in further in the text while explaining my methodology.

1.1.5. Transformation of Public Sphere and Public Intimacies

The central problem of my research, the actual transformation of "public" and "private" in the city is not neglected in the literature either. What is interesting, many authors have quite pessimistic attitude describing this change. Thus, Arendt (1959) emphasizes disappearance of

political component of public realm, while Sennett (1993) argues that public sphere as such is declining. Other social scientists stress the gloominess even more, pointing to the increasing social apathy and alienation, along with reduction of public interaction (Bauman 2000; Fischer 1981; Peillon). At the same time, another vision of the this transformation is represented by the works of Lofland (1989) and Brill (1989) who agree on the statement that during past 300 years public life of the city changed in the number of ways. Nevertheless, they are more optimistic about character of such changes, claiming that not only some forms of public life disappeared, but also the new ones emerged. I favor the later approach more, as my argument is that public sphere is not declining, but rather transforming by the elements of private sphere permeating it. Among the causes of these metamorphoses Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee (1998:178-82) mention increasing complexity of the city, suburban fragmentation, fear of crime, advances in technologies, and changes in family and employment structure. However, in case of Budapest it all is greatly featured by the context of post-socialist change.

In addition to the changes in the public sphere and public life, some scholars describe transformations that, as a consequence, occurred in the public places and could be generally described as privatization of the spaces that previously belonged to the public realm, increased control and security in public spaces, breaking ties with local history and geography (Chidister 1989; Cooper Marcus 1989; Cybriwsky 1999; Gehl 1989; Low, Taplin, and Scheld 2005). Moreover, new forms of public space, such as interactive media, text, image and voice communications, appear due to the technological development (Brill 1989; Sheller and Urry 2003). I take into account the aspect of technological advance in my research, for I think to an extent it facilitated the change of public sphere, offering new forms of social interaction.

At this point I want to discuss the indicator of the transformation which I use in my study, the public displays of intimacy. First of all, the idea of theorizing about problem of intimate, as something traditionally "private", in the context of "public" appears to be a feature of modern social thought. Thus, Giddens (1993:1) implies that sexual matters now constantly shape public domain. Intimacy in the city was studied in various aspects, addressing morals (Hampshire 1978), feelings of closeness with other urbanites (Smith, Form, and Stone 1954), normative issues (Berlant and Warner 1998; Gross 2005; Leach 2002; Leap 1999), psychoanalytical explanations (Pile 1996), and, finally, possible change of the public sphere by open displays of intimate (Butt 2003; Ringmar 1998).

More grounded theories of transformation of the public sphere which at the same time take into account public intimacies are represented by the works of Sennett, Bauman, and Illouz. Briefly summarizing, Sennett claims that public culture experiences a huge depression, because very intimate matters are brought into public, sense of eroticism is being substituted by sexuality, and sexuality, in turn, becomes basic and dominating characteristic of the identity. In his opinion, intimacy is simply loosing its frames and becoming unbalanced (Sennett 1993:7-8). Bauman (1993:207) insists on the concept of "liquid modernity", within which he treats transformation of eroticism into sexuality in the postmodern society as a trait of the privatization of the ambivalence, moreover, he points out the growth of public expertise of very private matters as an evidence of that. Illouz (1997) argues that in the contemporary society intimacy becomes a public concern, while romantic love turns into commodity and serves the whole branch of industry. Going even further, she also suggests that public expressions of intimate issues are consequences of the "emotional capitalism" developed in the late 20th century (Illouz 2007). As these theories in the more detailed versions allow to

build certain macro-models of public/private change I use them while analyzing my case study.

1.2. *Conceptually on the Methodology of the Research*

1.2.1. Everyday Life Approach

The aim of my study is twofold, as on the one hand, I intended to analyze the social representations of three generations of people about public displays of intimacies, whereas on the other, to observe behavior, the actual expressions of love and affection, in the urban public spaces. On the whole, this research was conducted within the framework of the everyday life approach, which gives high credits to the everyday practices of the individuals in the explaining social world. The wide broad of theories is covered by the everyday life theory: interactionism, dramaturgy, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, and existential sociology. Nevertheless, all of them are guided by the same set of assumptions. Therefore, first of all, general logic of the everyday life approach is pessimistic about ability of macro-perspective theories describe the diversity of social world. Its followers strongly suggest to study people, their behaviors, and interactions in their natural context, and, hence, the model of the actor is deeply rooted in his/her everyday activities. At the same time, social structure is perceived inseparably from the individuals that interact within it, being featured by them (Adler, Adler, and Fontana 1987).

1.2.2. Social Representations

Regarding the first dimension of my research, the social representations, they constitute one of the approaches to study everyday life. The great contribution towards development of the idea of social representations as such belongs to Moskovici, who was inspired by the theory

of collective representations of Durkheim (Bauer and Gaskell 1999). However, even though collective representations and social representations seem to be similar concepts, they have a number of distinctions. According to Flick (1998:49-50) firstly, collective representations are shared by the all members of society, while social representations are more differentiated and there could be several types of them. Secondly, collective representations constitute the common trait of several generations and, thus, are relatively stable, whereas social representations change more rapidly. And, finally, collective representations cause homogenizing effect, while social representations are more polemic.

Originally the research of social representations was associated with the popularization of scientific knowledge, but later the range of their application was extended. However, despite wide usage of this concept, Bauer and Gaskell (1999) note a little guidance on how actually employ the theory in the empirical research. Generally speaking three main components of the social representations are values, ideas, practices. At the same time, they also say that almost every method of social sciences could be applied in the research of social representations, as long as it follows some basic principles and seven conditions are satisfied. First one of them is that representations are functional to a certain collective activity of one social group. The second suggests that social milieus are carrier systems and functional references of the social representations. The third requires that both informal and formal arrangements of communication should be included, whereas the fourth expects finding several modes of representations among the social groups. The fifth demands taking into account temporal perspective in order to track changing structures of the representations. The sixth suggests that collective representations are best to study when new social concerns appear. And, finally, the seventh stresses that the researcher should not be too enthusiastic, as the best way to study them is disinterested participation. Of course, being more an ideal type model, the concept

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social representations rarely meet all of these principles in practice. Nevertheless, the more of them are present in the research the better it is.

In fact, I believe that most of these conditions are satisfied in my case. As public/private distinction in the individual actions of people is a matter of choice that determines certain views on people's everyday behavior and is functional for different social groups. These groups in the research are represented by three generations of people who live in Budapest, and my assumption is that their views on public displays of intimacy would be different, which at the same time offers temporal perspective on the social representations.

1.2.3. Generation Analysis

I want also to stress the importance of the comparative generation analysis aspect of the study, as it not only allows to track the change of the social representations, but also gives an opportunity to get the original information about people's public behavior during different time periods. However, first I must clarify possible methodological meanings that are ascribed to the idea of generation. Thus, being used in numerous anthropological and sociological studies, generation may be treated in four distinctive respects: as a kinship descent, as a cohort, as a life-stage, as people of the particular historical period (Kertzer 1983). Kinship meaning of generation is favored in many studies mostly in the field of social anthropology, though is not very suitable for my research. The cohort meaning refers to the age strata in the sense of the younger replacing the older. The life-stage usage of the term represents people who share the common experience at the same time, for example, while studying or working together. And, finally, generation, as people who lived in certain time period or epoch, is more used in historical aspect, and often tied to some events. Despite these distinctive connotations of the term, Kertzer suggests they are commonly mixed together in many

studies, in order to depict various sides of the social group. The same way I intended to combine two meanings: generation as the cohort and people of certain historical period in my research.

The source of information for studying social representations of different generations on public displays of intimacies in my case had been provided by interviewing people. Hence, fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with three generations of the Budapest inhabitants: approximately equal number of people per each generation. The major goal of the interviews was to collect people's attitudes and self-interpretations of the everyday experiences of public life and also understand their perception of "public" and "private" as such. According to that, the interview guide contains three basic topics to discuss (though is not strictly limited to them only): people's insights on "public" and "private", their observations and attitudes towards bringing intimate matters in public and its possible transformation over time.

1.2.4. Observing Public Behavior

I mentioned earlier that public places of the city are not homogeneous, and what is more important, many of them could not be treated as purely public or private, as they have features of both. For example, open spaces like streets, squares, and parks of the big cities are in the obvious way different form the cafes, movie theatres, shopping malls, and public transportation like metro. The later, though, being a public places, offers a greater degree of privacy and control of their owners. In terms of my study, I will call the first type of spaces public places and the second – semi-public/private. Therefore, I intuitively assume that the behavior of people, especially regarding expressions of their intimate feelings may be distinct in public and semi public/private places.

Having dedicated a great deal of his work to the observation of social interaction, Goffman (1971:x) provides insightful methodological advice for the observations of the everyday public life. His main point is to study the public domain "naturalistically", which means look at the people's interactions in their natural setting and context. This implies placing the researcher in the same, or as close as possible, setting and context as the observed people, so he/she is able to see usual experiences of people, and, at the same time, look beyond them. I think this fits in the case of observation I made, for it is essential to reflect not only as a alienated researcher, but also as a fair participant, while, for example, taking metro or sitting on the bench in the park. Although, it is important to mention that Giddens (1987:110) suggests Goffman himself recognized that his experience in observations is based upon white middle-class Americans, so everything mentioned is true as long as it applied in the competitive, individualistic cultural environment, which Budapest appears to be.

1.3. Design of the Research

Before discussing practical level of the research, I must clearly state that the main indicator of the change of public sphere within my research, which is public displays of intimacies. Operationally I define intimacies as inner thoughts to each other in the couple (Jamieson 1997:1), therefore, the public intimacies would be revealing the inner thoughts of the partners in public under the presence of strange people. I studied these inner thoughts trough the behavior and actions, gestures, body language, manifested sexuality. These were the key signs of evidence during my observations and interviews with people.

I have conducted four observations during my fieldwork, detailed information on which is provided below in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Observation Sites

#	Observation Site	Type of Public Space	Duration
1	Budapest Metro	Semi-private/public	Day-long
2	Shopping Mall "West End"	Semi-private/public	Day-long
3	Deak Ferenc ter (area around the metro station)	Public	Day-long
4	Park on the Erzsebet ter	Public	Day-long

While observing public behavior of people I was focused on following issues:

1. In which settings people display intimate matters more

2. What are the age/gender/well-being/marriage status and other possible visible characteristics of people who express their inner feelings of love and affection

3. Whether different types of public spaces encourage different patterns of behavior

4. How does the behavior of people changes during different times of the day

A substantial part of my fieldwork, however, was provided by the interviews. There were three major categories on which I was focused while interviewing people and observing public life of Budapest were:

1. Intimacies in public life of the city

2. Transformation of the public sphere

3. Perception of the public/private dichotomy

For the whole period of research I interviewed fourteen people of three generations. As I already mentioned, the category of the generation illustrates rather arbitrary division and stands for both: people of certain age group and time period. Hence, the first generation includes people of the age group from 45 to 60 years old and period of 1950s-1960s, the

second – from 30 to 45 and 1960s-1970s, and the third – from 20 to 30 and 1980s-1990s. First two generations were raised and educated under the socialist ideology, whereas the third generation is a product of the period of the liberalization of the regime and changing ideology. Due to the fact that interviews were held in English, the interviewees represent people with certain degree of education or relevant experience. Originally it was planned to interview Hungarians only. However, there are four interviews with people, who are not originally from Hungary, though have been living in Budapest for a while. Not being planned initially, this, in fact, supplemented the outcomes of the interview with views from the outside of Hungary and Budapest and brought some aspect of comparison into the results. The characteristics of the interviewees are presented in the Table 2.

Table 2. Characteristics of the Interviewees

#	Name of the Interviewee[3]	Age	Generation according to the Classification of This Research	Country of Origin	Living in Hungary, years	Living in Budapest, years	Date of the Interview
1	Judit	56	1	Hungary	56	56	April 29, 2009
2	Katalin	60	1	Hungary	60	60	April 30, 2009
3	Maria	53	1	Hungary	53	30	May 4, 2009
4	Orsolya	32	2	Romania	3	2	May 12, 2009
5	Zsofia	36	2	Romania	16	16	May 5, 2009
6	Eva	34	2	Hungary	34	34	May 4, 2009
7	Gabor	35	2	Hungary	35	14	May 5, 2009
8	Iren	42	2	Hungary	42	23	April 30, 2009
9	Roza	35	2	Hungary	35	10	May 8, 2009
10	Diana	27	3	Hungary	27	27	April 15, 2009
11	Imre	25	3	Hungary	25	25	May 6, 2009
12	Vera	27	3	Bulgaria	4	4	May 8, 2009
13	Tamas	27	3	Hungary	27	27	May 8, 2009
14	Emese	23	3	Romania	2	2	April 29, 2009

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[3] All names have been altered for reasons of anonymity.

After being done with both parts of the research and having information from the two types of source, I had an opportunity to verify my findings by each of them.

2. Findings of the Fieldwork

This chapter represents actual results of the conducted fieldwork, reflecting material gathered from both interviews and observations. The information is introduced according to the three categories: general assessments on the public expressions of intimacies, descriptions of change, and perceptions of "private" and "public".

2.1. Intimacies in Public

The everyday observations of city life in Budapest, as well, as those purposefully conducted within my study, demonstrated one basic tendency. Residents of this city are very open in displaying their inner feelings of love and affection (like intensively kissing, hugging, sitting on each others lap) in public places. On the one hand, those who practice such behavior seem to be very natural and loose about it, on the other, those who happen to surround them at that particular moment acted very casual. Having had another experiences and not being local, I decided to verify this particular observation while interviewing people. As it turned out, the majority of the respondents, irrespective of their age, were a bit surprised when were asked about widely spread kissing in public places of Budapest. Moreover, the majority of them perceive it as a quite natural thing to which they even never paid attention. For instance, Roza (35) answering the question about public kissing in Budapest: "I know that Hungarians, maybe they show more. They are kissing on the street or in public transportation, they're holding hands, or yelling, all kinds of emotions can show up" (May 8, 2009). The same thought is supported by Tamas (27): "I don't know whether it is a norm, I have never noticed it, and I've been living here for 27 years" (May 8, 2009). Many of the interviewees realized this exposure of Budapest residents to public after going abroad and comparing with other countries. Thus Katalin (60) says:

> It's quite typical for Budapest, but I don't know why. If you go to England, or to other city, you can't notice things like that. But in Hungary it's quite natural.... Though it came into fashion not many years ago (April 30, 2009).

Very similar experience is demonstrated in Iren's (42) words:

> I think I realized the things we are talking about at the moment when I went to the states. And I was shocked, because I lived on the campus and I was around the student for very long time. And after a while I realized a strange thing – the lack of intimacy to which I am used. So I think, I haven't seen in a whole year two people kissing! On the campus! And comparing countries, I must say, I is very natural here (April 30, 2008).

Thus, no matter which reaction they had, they all perceived it as a common phenomenon of their everyday life. As a result, many of the interviewees failed to say when was the last time they saw it, though were confident that see it very often.

In terms of other visual expressions of the intimate feelings and actions related to it seen in Budapest, the hugs, holding hands, touching each others bodies, very sexual clothing, topless sun tanning were named. I have also noticed all of the mentioned indicators during my observations, except for the sun tanning. However, I have as well spotted that certain activities are more common in certain places. For example, as my evidence suggests, metro is marked by the greater number of the kissing couples than any other sight of my observation. I suppose, besides the subjective interpretations of the metro atmosphere, it could be also explained by the combination of physical closeness of the bodies, passiveness of this type of traveling, and given amount of time that one has to spend in metro. At the same time, one of the peculiarities of the shopping mall observation was that due to shopping type of activities, couples walk a lot next to each other. Most of them are holding hands or put their arms around the waists of each other, however, there I noticed the majority of the couples in which man hold his hand on the girlfriend's derriere while walking. Generally speaking, from what I observed, the semi private/public places somehow encourage greater degree of revealing intimate feelings in public.

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While describing those people who bring their intimate matters to public places interviewees were very unanimous stating that those are mainly younger people, like teenagers. However, according to the interviews their age is not the only key factor in this situation, it is more about the contemporary times we all live in. Thus, Eva (34) suggests:

> I think it's more about young, yes, young people definitely do it more. Like teenagers. But they even treat each other differently. I think there is this change in the gap between men and women, they treat each other like strangers. They have more freedom to speak, to be on the same level. And I think it's also about my generation, those around thirty. But it also greatly depends on your education, and where you came from, and who were your parents, and did they do it in front of you. But I think that is the younger generation among which it is more accepted, and they expose themselves to the public much more. They do kissing everywhere: in the metro, on the bunch in park, escalators… it is just the trend which goes that way (May 4, 2009).

The same thought is expressed by Judit (56):

> I mean, people in their 60s, 70s, or 80s very, very, very seldom discuss such matters. Well, maybe they do, but I don't see it. I think it's more limited to teenagers and maybe people in their 20s, and that's it. I believe, over 30s it's very rare, I mean display of the emotions and intimacy. I don't think it happens with the older ones (April 29, 2009).

At the same time many respondents pointed to the level of education and origin as the factors on which public displays of intimacies might depend. Overall, the idea that those are also unfavorable people with poor education appeared several times during the interviews.

Katalin (60) mentions:

> I think it is done by teenagers only, not the older generations. Well, maybe, they are, but only in the 8th district you may see it. I think it has something to do with education. Mostly with education, plus if they are thought in the family not to do it. I think it also depends on origin. It means a lot (April 30, 2009).

Furthermore, Diana (27) emphasizes:

> Yes, it's mostly teenagers. But you know, another dimension of this public issue comes to my mind. I think more of the Roma people kissing each other in public spaces, and hugging each other more regularly than the non-Roma people. I think they definitely use the public space differently (April 15, 2009).

My observations support this thought, and I argue that intensiveness of public displays of intimacy is directly linked to the age. From what I have noticed, the teenagers are the most

active in accepting such model of public behavior, while among older couples that could be barely seen. As for the educational dimension, it is hard to judge based on the observations.

Another characteristic which differentiates respondents according to their age group their attitude towards publicly displayed intimacies. Thus, the first generation is far more conservative than claims to be. To be more precise, they are tolerant, but to an extent, and very often, express the opinion that just don't want to witness something very intimate in public. Thus, Judit (56) says:

> Sometimes, yes, it makes me feel uncomfortable. You know, this is none of my business, so why am I exposed to this? You know, that's your personal intimate sphere. I don't want to see it, I don't want to get any of it (April 29, 2009).

Whereas, younger generations, though have different opinions, are typically more tolerable and liberal in their judgments. Imre (25) points out:

> I don't really care, I mean I wouldn't like to see couple having sex just right here, but you know, or necrophil guy, but these are pretty special cases (May 6, 2009).

Another dimension of the public displays of the intimacies is verbal. Thus, many interviewees admit that they very often hear the discussions of private matters on the cell phone, and this mostly happens while they take public transport. The attitudes towards these chats differ: some feel curiosity, others don't pay attention to the heard, and some feel irritated. Nevertheless, all of the interviewed claim that often they cannot avoid becoming a passive part of such conversations due to the shared public space and indifference of those who speak on the phone. For example, Roza (35) tells:

> I don't think people would even look around. They just talk. And on the street it's not so bad, because you're just in the move, but in the public transportation or in the restaurant that could get really-really bothering! …You can really hear how people are discussing everything in public! And they don't think it's so audible and loud that everyone can hear it (May 8, 2009).

Moreover, the informants who are not originally Hungarians, but spent plenty of time living in Budapest suggest that it is something very typical of Budapest, which is not seen in smaller

towns or in other. Emese (23) answers the question whether the situation is the same outside Budapest:

> Probably not in villages. I would say that in villages, no. No, probably they don't. In larger towns, probably yes. Well, small villages again, it's different because people know each other. They start talking, you know, so probably, then people are more reserved in public places. In towns, probably, it's very similar to Budapest (April 29, 2009)

What is also curious is that my observations suggest that married couples and couples with kids are not that much expressive in public.

2.2. Changes of Public Sphere

The most information about the characteristics of the past of public sphere in Budapest I, certainly, received from the older generation. Their first response to the question about the public life in Budapest while they were teenagers and students was denial of any significant difference from nowadays.

However, later on in the conversation it was becoming particularly clear that there are several aspects in which public life was distinctive from what it is now. The most referred to among them are greater reliance on the group and collective opinions, higher moral standards, and greater control of the state. For instance, Judit (56) emphasizes:

> Oh, yes. In the "old times"…Everybody new everybody in the street and it was like a little village, really. When I first went to school at the age of 6, I could walk to school without any difficulty at all. My parents weren't worried, well, ok it was just very short distance, but today it's out of the question. …I knew everybody, really, all the old ladies talked to me. And not even in our building, but in the whole street. You know, you said hello to everybody those days. Yeah. And it was quite a lot of support. I was an only child and when my parents weren't at home, because they were at work or some at some other obligations then I could always, always go to a neighbor. I could spend the evening with the neighbors no problem, just like that. Today – no, I don't think it's possible (April 29. 2009).

Such dependency on each other in everyday life and the fact that the people in the neighborhoods knew each other very well, at the same time, provided a considerable mechanism of social control. And this, perhaps, was stimulating high morals and shaped

public behavior according to them. Furthermore, the thought that parents do not pay much attention to the moral education of their own children was repeated couple of times. Katalin (60) says:

> I think children are in the need of love. They don't get enough of it at home. Their parent are too busy, first of all they have to earn money… Often the parent are with their new boyfriends and girlfriends and they are busy with these new relationships more than they are with their children (April 30, 2009).

Needless to say that the influence of state should also not be neglected in the analysis, for like in many authoritarian regimes, state intervened in the all spheres of peoples' lives. The public expressions of the intimate relations, even as innocent as teenage sympathy, were not exception. Maria (53) says:

> It would never happen on the street when I was a student, because the police would do something. There were quite many policemen on the street at that time before 1990, under the communist regime… Once it happened when I was 18 or 19 years old and I went dancing with a boy. And in those times it was fashionable that the boy would walk me home, because it was late. So the boy used to live in the 14th district which is on the Pest side and I lived on the Buda side, which makes quite a big distance. And the policeman stopped us with the words: "What are you doing?!" and he wanted to see our identity cards… My kid would laugh on this nowadays! (May 4, 2009).

The same way many features of any visual sexuality were suppressed, along with the diversity of appearances. And children had to wear uniforms.

These three aspects perfectly matched existing communist ideology and were severely supported by state. Nonetheless, the informants from the older generation spoke about norms of public behavior during socialism with quite positive attitude. On the whole, it is understandable due to the common disposition of people towards romanticizing their childhood experiences.

Meanwhile, this generation looks to an extent pessimistically at the present-day norms of public behavior. Even more, they stress the individualization and even alienation. Thus, Judit (56) empresses her vision of the problem:

People are not so close any more. They are more alienated, everybody lives their own life. It's a global trend, so not just Hungary or Budapest…But maybe in those days people were basically quite poor, even in Nador utca. Although, Nador utca was kind of middle class street, but even so, nobody had lots of money, nobody had lots of wealth or reaches. So we had to support each other. And, of course, there were shortages, I mean shortages of everything around 1950s – 1960s, so obviously you had to help each other. If you didn't help other people then you are lost. You needed other people's help. Today, maybe, you don't need it so much. Although, I believe, everybody would benefit. Even today everybody will benefit if we help each other a little bit, but somehow we don't. In those days it was absolutely normal that I as an only child, I had a lot of friends coming in. you know, two, three, four, other little girls they came in, and if they came to our house then we gave them food. And then when I went to their house for a day or even longer they fed me without problem. Today it's not quite a thing, although it wouldn't be a problem, but…(April 29, 2009)

The second generation appeared to describe Budapest public sphere of their teenage and student years in a more liberal terms. Although, these people clearly position themselves between older and younger generations. Therefore, the thought that they did in public almost everything what youngsters do today, though not the same radical way, is quite common. Eva (34) says:

During my student years it all was pretty much the same. Probably it was not the same with my grandmother or my mother, but my generation is a lot like this. It's probably has something to do with the 1970s and sexual revolution, but yes, it was the same (May 4, 2009).

At the same time, they also recognize the changes brought after the fall of the communist regime.

The third generation, consisting of the youngest respondents, looks far more contrasting. The majority expresses very liberal position towards almost everything in public, accept for some very radical cases. However, when talking about public behavior and its exclusive freedom nowadays, the idea of alienation is being unanimously supported by many. Imre (25) suggests:

Now everyone calls the right to themselves, so that's a definitely good development that people don't think of themselves as naturally inferior but the problem is that they become alienated. And those people on the public transport reading magazine stories, like these old ugly ladies who seem not to have husband or something. And they read these celebrity magazine. And they just do not communicate and they don't watch other people (May 6, 2009).

I would even say that to some extent this alienation is visible while observing public behavior of people. Very often they act like they do not want to be bothered by anything or anyone, they are all in their listening to music, talking on the phones and not looking around much.

2.3. Perception of "Public" and "Private"

Interestingly enough, perception of private and public as such, does not vary in many cases according to the age group or generation of the informants. Taking into account the abstractness of the idea of public/private distinction, I asked respondents about their associations, the first things that were coming to their minds when they thought of something being called "private" or "public". As it turned out, all three generations perceive public and private sphere in a very traditional sense, even though their opinions on the normative aspect of the question vary significantly. One of the dominating thoughts among the majority of the respondents about the public/private distinction is the idea of control over the place and people who are permitted to be there. This judgment on the everyday level determines whether something is considered to be private or public.

At the same time, private sphere is still perceived by the majority as the domain of personal feelings, family relations, children raising, personal choices, and private matters. Gabor (35) expresses his opinion: "Private sphere is everything that starts from my gate. My home, my family" (May 5, 2009).

On the other hand, public sphere is often associated with the word combinations that incorporate the term "public" in them: like public transportation, public schools, and public toilets. Along with that, the ideas of communal usage of space and interaction with crowds of strange people were also brought up. Being much more liberal and open in the sense of which

type of activities and behaviors are allowed in public and which have to be left for the private sphere, younger generation still relates "private" to the images of home and family. Nonetheless, along with that, the younger generation perceives public sphere in a more political sense then any other, connecting it to the notions like public protest, demonstration, political discussion, and mass media. For example, Imre (25) says:

> When I hear "public sphere" I think more about press, how people talk in public. It is more a political category. And "private sphere" doesn't actually means much to me, because your private life is also public, it's a more restricted public. For instance, in the place where I live, the walls are really thin, so we can everything from each others room, you know (May 6, 2009).

Another dimension through which I tried to capture the normative understanding of public and private was the types of activities tolerated and objected by interviewees for each of the spheres and their attitudes towards them. At one point, informants tolerate many of the personal activities performed in public, especially when someone has no other option unless to do that. Yet, simultaneously, they would prefer not to be part of it or witness any of those if it is possible. This tendency is particularly visible among the older generations of the interviewed.

3. Analysis of the Reconfiguration of Public Sphere in Budapest

3.1. Social Representations of Three Generations

The information given in the previous chapter allows to build three versions of the social representations of public sphere according to the views of different generations. Notwithstanding, I also underline the importance of the historical context while constructing these social representations and analyzing possible peculiarities of each generation in understanding public/private dichotomy. According to the basic components of the social representation as a concept I tried to capture the main values, ideas, and practices of each generation. The brief summary of them is reflected in the Table 3.

Table 3. Main Features of Three Generations

Generation	Historical Background/Ideology	Values and Norms of Public and Private	Ideas (Perception of Public and Private)	Practices (Public Behavior)	Attitude towards public displays of intimate
1st generation (45-60 years old) 1950s-1960s	Socialism, Communism	Traditional, conservative.	Pessimistic about public sphere today, romanticized vision of their times Public = shared, no control Private = home	Accept some private behavior in public, though would never do themselves	Moderately Tolerant (it doesn't bother, but it shouldn't be there)
2nd generation (30-45 years old) 1960s-1970s	Socialism, declining communism, consequences of sexual revolution.	Traditional, though less conservative than previous generation.	Public= shared, no control Private = home	Accept some private behavior in public, would do some of that	Moderately Tolerant
3rd generation (20-30 years old) 1980s- 1990s	Post-social, westernization	Liberal	Public = politics Private = home	Accept almost everything	Absolutely Tolerant

3.1.1. The First Generation

The first generation, the older one, appears to be the most conservative in their attitudes and the most traditional in the values they adhere. These people were brought up during the times when Hungary was under the communist rule in its most authoritarian and harsh period. The control over the private matters was severely exercised, especially in the state institutions and public places. As the interviewees suggest, the police had a right to control public behavior of the couples in love, people could be fined for the too unusual or bright clothes, teenagers in schools were obliged to wear uniforms and cover all the parts of their bodies. The same way, even despite the fact that the ideology was not well received among some of people, certain of its aspects, of course, were reflected in the everyday life practices, as a sense of collectivity and greater integration in the local community. Consequently, this constituted a powerful tool of social control and kept public displays of intimate on the lowest level according to the existing norm. Despite everything, this generation still has warm memories about times when people cared about each other and were not so individualistic. And, thus, in this sense, the public realm for them had features of warmth and human feelings close to the description of family, which now is associated with private domain only.

This generation is inclined to see public sphere today in rather negative light, partly due to the variety activities, like displays of intimate relations, uncovering particular parts of the body, usage of alcohol and drugs, which are brought to the public eye today, and which, at the same time, were not present there during their times. Being brought up under much more oppressive social and economical circumstances than later generations, they have much more moderate moral standards and overall are much more reserved in their public behavior. Meanwhile, despite such contrasting everyday experiences they express amazingly considerable degree of tolerance and acceptance towards new liberal norms of public behavior

of nowadays. This is particularly evident in a comparison with the same generations of other post-socialist countries. For instance, having spent most time of my life in Ukraine, I must say that under the same circumstances of post-socialist times and urban environment, the very expressively kissing couple of youngsters would provoke quite a reaction from the side of the older generation. And though the majority of the interviewees from this generation in Budapest would never display publicly their intimate feelings in the manner it is done by contemporary youth, they tolerate such behavior in most cases. What is interesting is that these statements are totally supported by my observations of public life in Budapest, where the majority of people expressing their love and affection in public places are not older than thirty years old. At the same time, people over forty five make an impression of being fine with those or tolerant enough not to demonstrate their inconvenience.

3.1.2. The Second Generation

The second generation is situated approximately in the middle of the two quite contrasting examples of the older and the younger generations. However, it represents the gradual change in the social representations between the mentioned two generations, though, has its own background peculiarities of historical context. These people simultaneously have certain degree of conservativeness possibly socially inherited from their parents, and more liberal ideas evoked by changed political and social environment. This is generation raised after Hungarian revolution of 1956 when communist regime became weakened and eventually transformed into the so-called "goulash communism", meaning specifically Hungarian re-direction from the main communist principles and mixing them with elements of free market and maintenance of the basic human rights. Hungarians were the most unrestrained from the Soviet block people in their possibilities of traveling abroad to the capitalist countries. At the

same time the sexual revolution was on its peak during 1970s and this generation was definitely marked by its echo.

As it appears to be, this generation is conservative in the sense that they do not accept all kinds of public displays of intimacy which are present today, especially the most radical ones. However, they recognize that are quite different in this aspect from the older generations. They agree on their greater sense of freedom and openness and, actually, do accept some of the public behaviors like expressing their love and sympathy by slightly kissing and hugging in public places from time to time, discussing their private matters when have no other option, and revealing their sexuality. They acknowledge such behavior not only in the sense of other people doing it, but also for their own account, though with a consideration that this is being done moderately and does not disturb others. What is more compelling, is that the majority of them pictures the generation of their parents as a quite liberal people, whereas the most strictly conservative for them is the generation of their grandparents. They contemplate about private sphere in the same terms of home, comfort, place of their own control and trust, pretty much as the older generation. The public sphere is perceived rather as impersonal interaction with strangers.

3.1.3. The Third Generation

The third generation, the younger one, emerges as the most radical among others. First of all, it appears to be a product of the post-socialist change, which brought the whole range of the new values and liberal ideas to the agenda. These values, of course, were shared not by all of them and to the different extents, nonetheless, in comparison with previous two, this generation is the most open in their minds as well, as in their practices. One of the most important issues for them is personal freedom, which, in my opinion, is even more encouraged by the drawbacks of the previous regime. They strive for it, they enjoy having it,

and they want it for everybody – that is the reason for such liberal and in some cases even radically liberal attitude towards all forms of public behavior. Hence, public sphere in their minds is very often is joint with its political senses, like speaking out, participation, and press. Allowing bringing to public sphere almost everything, unless it harms the surrounding, they sometimes even seem to be not only tolerant, but indifferent towards other people.

3.2.   Models of the Public Sphere Transformation

The social representations of public and private sphere of the three generations gives an opportunity to construct the model of the transformation of public sphere as it appears to happen in Budapest approximately in the recent fifty years. At the same time, elaborating on my argument I will compare this model with other three established models which deal with contemporary changes in the interrelations of public and private sphere and belong to Illouz, Bauman, and Sennett. Mentioned models are outlined in the Table 4.

Table 4. The Models of the Public Sphere Transformation

	Concept	Time Scale	Place	Understanding of the studied society	Character of the change	Understanding of public intimacies
Eva Illouz	Emotional capitalism	19th-20th century	The USA	Late capitalist society	Reconstruction of public sphere	Comodified love
Zygmunt Bauman	Liquid modernity	20th-21st century	Europe	Postmodern society	Redundancy of public interaction	Form of liquid love
Richard Sennett	End of public sphere	18th-20th centuries	Western Europe	Contemporary Western Society	Decline of public sphere	Basic need and passive state of being
Public Sphere in Budapest	Fragmentation of public sphere	1950s - present	Europe - Budapest	Post-socialist society	Fragmentation of public sphere	Declaration of freedom

3.2.1. The "Emotional Capitalism" by Illouz

Eva Illouz (1997; 2007) deals with the problem of love in the late capitalist society and the way it changes public sphere in the 20th century. Her main argument is that by starting revealing love relations to the public, people began the restructuring of public space. Simultaneously, the whole industry of leisure connected to the romantic relations appeared and developed enormously throughout 20th century. As a result, romantic interactions became more and more a public form of experience, which allowed appearances of the "islands of privacy" right in the middle of the public spaces. Engaged so much with the mass industry, love as such became comodified, and intimate relations became a subject to market logic. However, this did not cause the decline of emotional expression, but the other way around, made it a matter of public, so that participate in public life means expose intimate issues for its judgment.

Although the theory of Illouz has quite an explanatory power, it is very specific in the sense of being built up on the case of the USA, taking into account the historical and social context of the country over two centuries. Moreover, the central focus of this model is love itself, and all the implications about relation of public and private have rather supplementary role. Hence, in my opinion, it makes it only partially relevant in the case of Budapest due to the different political contexts experienced by Hungary and the USA.

3.2.2. The "Liquid Love" by Bauman

Zygmunt Bauman (2000; 2003) analyzes the postmodern society extrapolating his ideas based on his contemplations about social conditions of modern Europe. Notwithstanding, the problem of romance and its displays are not a central part of his concept either. However, he dedicates it significant portion of the analytical effort within the framework of his macro-

concept of "liquid modernity". In order to describe romantic relationship of the postmodern society he introduces the concept of "liquid love". This concept offers a philosophical understanding of the notion of love and the forms in which contemporary times shape it. Therefore, "liquid love" is about state of uncertainty, insecurity, contrasting intensions between two people, who want to be together and apart, have freedom and be restricted at the same time. They introduce private behaviors to the public, sharing their intimate feelings with the others, and simultaneously avoid interactions with strangers. They consume sex and issues related to it, and go further without turning back. Thus, their relations are not firm, they are uncertain, and, speaking metaphorically, liquid.

In my opinion, Bauman's illustration of the intimacies in the contemporary society in many ways overlaps with my own observations in terms of this project. Nevertheless, he operates with very abstract categories and does not offer much of the specificity of the particular cases. Moreover, he is quite pessimistic about the public sphere and many times had stressed that it is declining, which is not the case of Budapest.

3.2.3. The "Decline of Public Sphere" by Sennett

In my opinion, among the rest Richard Sennett (1993) is remarkably visible for his comprehensive work on the change of public sphere. Moreover, I find his theory of special importance, for the key concept in his reflections on the problem is the notion of intimacy and its representation throughout European history from the 18th century till nowadays. Sennett argues that public sphere began to disappear over the last several generations. He insists on the decline of public speaking and transformation of the political public categories into the psychological ones. In addition, all of the mentioned is accompanied by the crucial change of the private domain, and, in particular, by disappearance of public restrictions for the displays

of intimacies. Along with that the whole philosophy of physical love is being redefined switching from eroticism to the sexuality, from the social interaction to the state of being passive, setting intimate relations on the basis of market exchange. Hence, the public culture, an epitome of which he sees within the society of ancient Rome, is substituted by the ideology of intimacy. At the same time, he mentions that ideology of intimacy is often a feature of authoritarian regimes.

I think the concept of the Sennett is the most grounded and the most suitable for the explanation of the case study of Budapest, yet some of its principles are hardly applicable to the reality I studied. Of course, my research takes into account only the second half of the 20th century, whereas Sennett's approach is more sophisticated in this sense. Nonetheless, I strongly disagree with him on the idea of disappearance of public sphere, which will be further reflected in my model of this change. Finally, his claim about tyrannies of intimacies on the political level seems to be quite contradictive to my findings of Budapest public life.

3.2.4. Towards a New Assessment of Public Sphere in Budapest

First of all, I want to emphasize that the change of public sphere that is discussed in terms of this thesis, in my opinion, is certainly a transformation of the public sphere, but not a decline, as it is suggested by many contemporary sociologists. Furthermore, as I see this transformation in the case of Budapest, it appears rather as fragmentation of public sphere by the elements of private behavior. In this case the public displays of intimacies constitute an indicator of this permeation of private into the public sphere and the evidence of the changing social and political order of the society.

Constructing the idea of public and private in the chronological order, starting from the times of authoritarian communist regime, I was challenged by a little discrepancy in the contemplations of the older generation about public sphere of those times. On the one hand, they mentioned presence of strong control of the state over the public behavior of people. Many personal freedoms which reflect and reveal parts of private were strictly limited. From the first sight it even may seem that the domain of public was completely closed for the private issues. However, on the other hand, this generation stressed the idea of the great level of community involvement and referred several times to the idea of mutual support among people from the neighborhoods. Mutual support and, thus, mutual dependency on each other were constantly stimulating sense of collectivity. Furthermore, people were engaged into face-to-face interactions within the community much more. Hence, under condition of greater collective spirit more of the private matters, like personal problems or family issues, were opened and shared within the public realm of the local communities. And although, private relations were not that visible in their public displays as today, people were aware of them. What is more interesting that it was absolutely congruent with the existing communist ideology, which relied on the idea of collectiveness a lot. At the same time, it served as an integrating and controlling social force, so as a consequence, public behavior pf people was quite reserved. Therefore, there existed a part of the public sphere within which a considerable amount of private was integrated through the everyday life activities.

In contrast, today social value is individualism, and democracy supports this advantage with the claims for freedom, equality, and personal liberties. And although, the remarkable degree of private and even intimate issues is now brought in public sphere, it does not seem to be integrated there properly. These public displays of very personal declare quite an amount of freedom of those who practice them, freedom extensive enough to abstract the mind from the

rest of the society, and, consequently, a degree of indifference from those who may see it and not care at the same time. Therefore, I argue that the reverse side of such individualization is alienation of people from each other. However, it is not only ideology of liberalism that stimulates this alienation, for I think that technological advances of modernity offered a great deal of the devices which except for their benefits have some controversial social consequences. For example, cell phones offer communication without face-to-face interactions, internet suggest new ways of socializing sometimes even without actual people involved, ipods, so widely used while person moves trough public space, increase abstraction of the mind and concentration on the inner self. All of that supports the alienation of people from each other and from the particular place, no matter whether it is private or public. Hence, public sphere appears to be fragmented with many extracts of private life which are not integrated in it.

Therefore, over the past fifty years the public sphere of Budapest went through the changes from the state of integration with the elements of private life towards the state of being fragmented by them. It is clear that the relation between public and private domains of the city is contextualized by the social and political environment. However, my outcomes are different from the conclusions of Sennett who claims that authoritarian regimes often are featured by the ideologies of intimacy, whereas, this case study shows that it is not always so. At the same time I had not noticed the decline and even more, disappearance of public sphere on which both Sennett and Bauman insist, for I argue that alienation does not automatically assumes decline of public sphere, as even though public life may be very lively.

At the same time, certain points should be taken into consideration, as this model was built on the example of the urban environment of particular time period, and with a very specific

pattern of socialism reality and, thus, post-socialist transformation. All of the discussed points

of the public sphere fragmentation process are presented in the Table 5.

Table 5. Key Factors of the Transformation of Public Sphere in Budapest

1950s	Factors	2000s
Communism	**Dominating Ideology**	Liberalism
Authoritarian	**Political Regime**	Democratic
Collectivity	**Social Environment**	Individualism
Community Integration ⟷ Social Control		Personal Motivation ⟷ Alienation
People are reserved	**Public Behavior**	People are open
Public Sphere with Integrated Elements of Private Sphere	**Public/Private Dichotomy**	Public Sphere is fragmented by Elements of Private Sphere

Concluding Remarks

This thesis has presented the study of contemporary transformation of the public sphere in Budapest characterized by a severe permeation of intimate practices into it. Although it has been greatly theorized, the relation of the "private" and "public", and the transformation of the public sphere in particular, still represents a problem dependent on the historical and social context of the specific place or society. It is clearly seen in the case of Budapest, the post-socialist city which is different simultaneously from both: western European urban environments and post-soviet ones.

In order to reach the main goal of the research and find the theoretical model which would fit the description of this change in the most relevant way, I gathered information of two kinds: the experiences and reflections of three generations of people and, at the same time, the patterns of their behavior according to my own observations. Hence, methodologically I adhered to the interpretative paradigm and used the everyday life approach while performing interviews with residents of Budapest and observing the behavior of people in public places.

These two kinds of the evidence collected during the fieldwork overall demonstrated similar tendencies. First of all, public displays of intimate feelings are widespread in Budapest both in their visual and verbal form, and are perceived as natural behaviors for this place. At the same time, they really depend on the age of those who accept such practices, where the most expressive in this sense are teenagers and people up to thirty years old and the least expressive are older generations. The majority of the respondents notice the change that has occurred in the public sphere and most of them compare contemporary public sphere with the socialist times, where many of the interviewees stress the idea of the alienation of people today. And

although the everyday definitions of public sphere vary among the respondents, private is described in a very traditional way, as the domain of home and emotions.

With the information collected, I constructed the social representations of public and private sphere according to the reflections of three different generations of the Budapest residents. The most contrasting were the representations of the older and younger generation, where the middle-aged group was in the middle of the two, not only on the scale of age, but also of conservatism-liberalism, and, thus, acceptance of certain practices of revealing intimate matters in public. Brought up under different political and social circumstances, these generations have quite distinct social representations and constitute an adequate case to track the change of public sphere.

Finally, social representations of these generations allowed to see the picture of change on the whole, and, thus, find the model which suits them the best way. In this attempt I used three established theories which deal with the transformation of public sphere in the context of intimacy: Illouz's concept of "emotional capitalism", Bauman's concept of "liquid modernity", and Sennett's concept of the "decline of public sphere". However, all three authors refer mostly to the examples of western capitalist societies, which is not fully the case in Budapest. Moreover, the central problem of the Illouz's concept is love, not as much the public sphere itself, whereas Bauman and Sennett claim that public sphere is disappearing.

Therefore, the model of the fragmented public sphere was suggested for the case of Budapest, claiming that since 1950s till 2000s public sphere of Budapest went through the range of reconfigurations along with the changes of the political and social context. Although, being integrated with the elements of private life during the socialist regime due to the greater sense

of collectivity and dependency of people on each other, public sphere was not that much exposed to the displays of intimacies as today. Moreover, not only the state control of the private matters oppressed these displays, but also a greater social control conditioned by the same value of collectivity. Whereas, today under the conditions of democracy and prevalence of the individual interests, public sphere is more open for the expressions of intimate feelings. Although these displays do not constitute an integral part of public sphere due to the greater alienation of people.

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