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Social Quality and Local Social Services

I.

Proposing this topic when we discussed the preparation of the meeting I felt on safe ground: I have had a project of the mid 2000s under the title Qu/A/Si – Quality and Accessibility of Social Services for Inclusion, funded by the European Commission's General Directorate for Employment, Social Affairs and Equality Opportunities as point of reference in mind had been. At the time of the project the SQ-thinking had not been as sophisticated as it is today; also within that framework the task had been relatively clearly defined and limited: concerned with the applicability of SQ-thinking in specifically defined fields; and especially, social services had been taken for granted and defended in a specific socio-institutional perspective. At the time a major point of the debate had been concerned with the pros (especially suggested from the European Commission and the European Council) and cons (especially issued by NGOs) of privatisation of – as they had been called at the time – Services of General Interest.

Now, as we heard in the presentation given by Thomas Lawson, *The Times they are Changing* – at the time we had been talking about NGOs, later it had been CSOs, nowadays we are told to talk about NSAs – all this is not about terminological changes but at the core we are talking about changes in reality. Teaching realties, be it real structures or be it young people, by putting normative demands in front of them, is problematic. Changes have to be considered as dialectical issue of acting within given structures in order to change them and developing with this the conditions for change of processes of which people in their daily life a carriers.

One very important change since then is that today many are by and large not contesting anymore the role played by private providers. Talking today about the topic of service provision and the role of different actors is usually about

regulation, definition and measurement of quality standards, possible mechanisms of controlling implementation etc.

Another important aspect is that – in practice – there seems to be a kind of fundamental and general consensus:[1] though social services and to a certain degree of public responsibility are generally accepted, it is equally accepted that we are facing the need and unavoidability of change – sure, allowing very different interpretations of what such change is about.

II.

But this – and approaching the question from the other side – is a major issue and takes the perspective into a fundamentally different direction. So we may ask provocatively two questions:

- What is the actual meaning of social services – and moreover, can they be in any way meaningful in a positive sense?
- Are social quality and the concept of social services compatible with each other or is there a fundamental tension between the two: social services, taken in a strict sense, seems to be somewhat oppressive, subordinating, characterised by the meaning of serving, the opposite of social quality being concerned with the social, defined as

> *an outcome of the interaction between people (constituted as actors) and their constructed and natural environment. Its subject matter refers to people's interrelated productive and reproductive relationships. In other words, the constitutive interdependency between processes of self-realisation and processes governing the formation of collective identities is a condition for the social and its progress or decline.*
> *(van der Maesen, Laurent J.G./Walker, Alan, 2012: Social Quality and Sustainability; in: Van der Maesen, Laurent J.G./Walker, Alan*

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[1] Just as reminder it may be mentioned that whenever we are speaking of consensus, we are dealing with hegemony as 'mechanism' that defines this 'agreement'.

(eds.): Social Quality. From Theory to Indicators: Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan; 250-274; here: 260)

Taking both aspects together, social services are structurally perpetuating a dichotomy between the social and individuals in two directions: individuals 'being served' by 'social' entities; and also 'the social', understood as 'public space' or 'public matter' being served by these provisions and providers, aiming on the integration of individuals and/or groups and social strata.

III.

Of course, one may leave these questions aside: The world is as it is. And as we cannot really change it fundamentally, the most we can do is to alter some marginalia in order to overcome the more or less obvious shortfalls of the system and its subsystems.

However, there are some fundamental issues, going far beyond the issue of availability of resources and the like – issues that usually dominate the debate. Critique emerges from all sides – and it is not the first time. At stake is the entire social fabric, and the social 'inefficiency' of social services. Some of the main reasons can be seen in the following:

- the availability of resources
- and the huge amount that is actually needed for administering services, thus being lost for the provisions themselves
- entailing a substantial orientation towards administering social problems instead of profoundly dealing with them
- not least based on the assumption that the core of social problems is the individuals' lack of (cap)ability or individuals' misbehaviour
- leading to a need of looking after somebody (individual), serving or helping him/her
- thus undermining the criteria of social quality, namely that we should be looking at the 'interaction between people (constituted as actors) and their constructed and natural environment'.

IV.

We find, in other words, a constellation that is very close to the situation characterising the end of the post-WW-II-boom phase. Wealth or even affluence going hand in hand with new poverty which can actually been seen as social poverty. And moreover, it had been in many cases a public wealth (though coming to the end) and a private poverty – poverty not least as relative poverty, i.e. poverty in relation to what could be expected from the public wealth.

– Of course, one has to be careful at lest in two respects.

(i) we do not find a simple 'replacement' of old patterns – many of them, including manifest 'old poverty' persisted;

(ii) also talking of 'new', social' poverty does not mean that these problems did not exist earlier – to some extent it is a matter of grades, to some extent it is about perceptions, to some extent it is about concerned people gaining and claiming a voice.

V.

Speaking of a somewhat similar situation has to be qualified also in respect of fundamental differences. Today we are not at a stage of affluence. Moreover, the undeniably existing wealth is private whereas the impoverishment of the public increased. If anything, we may say that we arrived at a turning point where it is increasingly obvious that the existing patterns of integration do not work satisfactorily and we see an 'impoverishment of the social/public spheres'. We have to consider 'working'/'functioning' integration as matter with different dimensions (or we may say layers) – heuristically we may apply at least for the time being the principle of subsidiarity as spelled out by the catholic social doctrine. Accordingly, we can differentiate between two perspectives:

- the one is concerned with the tension between informality/immediacy and formality/institutionality;
- the other is a matter of normality and exceptionality of 'socially accepted and required' life courses or 'consensualised normality'.

With respect to the formalisation we may add that this is at least to some extent simply a matter of distancing – and as such it concerns both, the 'degree' of institutionalisation and the locality where the 'institutional rules' are defined – e.g. looking at the distinction between local and national level; but for instance also looking at 'really' and 'spiritually' claimed validity of rules.

VI.

We can assume that societies develop a kind of temporary equilibrium of integration. As 'consensualised normality' it is first and foremost a matter of a given hegemonic system, bringing together (or we may say: 'hegemonically coordinating and harmonising') the different dimensions constituting the social. Emphasising the aspect of production and reproduction and also emphasising the socio-political character of the economy we can point on four dimensions, namely the accumulation regime, the mode of regulation, the life regime and the mode of life.[2] All four of these mechanisms have specific local connotations – although the meaning of locality takes very different forms and ranges. Instead of speaking of 'local', a more appropriate term is that of social space. Such term reflects the borders that are relevant for the practice concerned with the different dimensions, i.e. accumulation and regulation. The relevant practice can be assessed by the following two criteria: 'formality' and 'normality'.

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[2]   The accumulation regime is defined as
>   *a particular combination of production and consumption which can be reproduced over time*
>   *despite conflictual tendencies*
>   *(Jessop, Bob: State Theory. Putting Capitalist States in their Place; Cambdridge: Polity Press in*
>   *association with Basil Blackwell, 1990: 308).*

This goes hand in hand with a specific mode of regulation, i.e.
>   *an institutional ensemble and complex of norms which can secure capitalist reproduction pro*
>   *tempore despite the antagonistic character of capitalist social relations*
>   *(Jessop, Bob: State Theory. Putting Capitalist States in their Place; Cambridge: Polity Press in*
>   *association with Basil Blackwell, 1990: 308).*

In order to deal with this problematique in a study on the educational system in Ireland I proposed with Deirdre Ryan the concepts of life regime and mode of life is defined in parallel to the economic dimensions mentioned before. Thus, under life regime we understand a combination of factors regarding the individual, locating him/her in the physical and social environment that can be reproduced over time despite conflictual tendencies. On the other side, the mode of life is defined as an ideological and psychological constellation of various and complex norms that can secure the individual's integration into the capitalist circle of reproduction *(see Ryan, Deirdre/Herrmann, Peter (2005): Education – Just Another Commodity. Exposing the Rhetoric of 'Human Capital' in the Light of Social Quality, in: Herrmann, Peter (ed.): Utopia between Corrupted Public Responsibility and Contested Modernity. Globalisation and Social Responsibility; New York: Nova Science: 2005).*

informal	Formal			
Integration				
		integra-tion	normal	
			exceptional	

MATRIX 1: DIMENSIONS OF NEEDS FOR INTEGRATION

Both are in some way relative, i.e. they are a matter of the said hegemony and with this they are permanently contested. Having said this, means not least to accept that they are historically changing. Such change takes different forms. Some way of classification is proposed by the following:

- permanent, though 'latent' struggle between classes and/or social strata
- manifest struggle with a revolutionary change
- latent or manifest negotiations between social classes/strata and/or their representatives[3] around specific issues or the general consensus
- latent or manifest individual 'deviance'.

The problematic case from which social services in the modern understanding emerge is the situation of change in one of the dimensions without being reflected by complementing changes in the other areas – complementing in terms of being of the same pace, happening at the same time, moving into the same direction and/or occurring within the same social space.

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[3] These can be elected representatives or 'charismatic leaders'.

CHANGE AREA	EXAMPLES FOR DIFFERENTIAL TENSION
Space	increasing spatial mobility as 'standard' requirement of the labour market standing side by side with the need to secure part of the subsistence in private networks, requiring local ties
Time	need of permanent and immediate availability versus increasing time consuming requirements
Direction	women becoming part of the labour force though the expectation that they fulfil the 'housework duties' is maintained
social space	global connectedness in terms of different cultures and languages with limited possibilities to settle in order to reach a sufficient level of accommodation

TABLE 1: EXAMPLES OF DIVERGENCE

Of course, this model is established on the assumption of the principle validity of balance (though not equilibrium) of forces at least spanning over a certain time. This includes an alternation of different forms and mechanisms of integration *(as for instance outlined as matter of the development of 'community' and 'society'; s. Herrmann, Peter: Gemeinschaft der Gesellschaft – die Suche nach einem Definitionsrahmen für Prekarität; in: Hepp, Rolf (ed.): The Fragilisation of Socio-structural Components/Die Fragilisierung soziostruktureller Komponenten; Bremen: Europäische Hochschulschriften; 2009: 76-107).* Also – and for the analysis of social services more important – is the fact that 'social services' have to be characterised by the exact target. The following – somewhat tentative – classification is proposed:

- services may be 'personalised', i.e. deal with personal adaptation to specific conditions, based on what is seen as personal[4] in(cap)ability – for instance provision of personal support for disabled people to live independently in their own accommodation;
- they may be 'social', i.e. deal with the adaptation of social conditions to the requirements of certain groups, based on what is seen as personal

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[4] Speaking of personal can be a matter of individuals in the strictest sense or it may be also a concern of individuals belonging to a group with specific characteristics.

in(cap)ability – for instance adapting public buildings in ways that they are accessible for disabled people;

- services may be 'personalised', i.e. deal with personal adaptation to specific conditions, based on what is seen as soci(et)al in(cap)ability – for instance providing 'sheltered employment' for people who do not fulfil the requirements set by standard employment

- they may be 'social', i.e. deal with the adaptation of social conditions to the requirements of certain groups, based on what is seen as soci(et)al in(cap)ability – for instance the change of requirements within schools by moving towards integration schools.

In short, these services are not – as the term commonly suggests – provisions that 'support' people; it is more accurate to speak of mechanisms of socialisation. The reference to new and social poverty is exactly about this: it is about a given and accepted standard of social integration loosing its functional capacities. This can be a matter of lack of material (public budgets) or human (decreasing active employment) resources in relation of the societally defined needs. The need of mechanisms can be defined by both: the demand ore the supply side. It has to be added – and later *(page 10)* this will be taken up – that the dimension of 'support' is actually a tricky bit. In a simplified way[5] we can speak of a tension between participatory-emancipatory orientation versus passivising-subordinating orientation. It is important to establish the fundamental criteria allowing us to determine these requirements – independent of the concrete substance.

VII.

So, looking at integration it is in terms of social quality thinking a matter of constituting the social, already earlier defined as

> *outcome of the interaction between people (constituted as actors)*
> *and their constructed and natural environment. Its subject matter*
> *refers to people's interrelated productive and reproductive*

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[5]   One reason for saying 'simplified' is that in several cases both orientations go actually hand in hand.

relationships. In other words, the constitutive interdependency between processes of self-realisation and processes governing the formation of collective identities is a condition for the social and its progress or decline.

(van der Maesen, Laurent J.G./Walker, Alan, 2012: Social Quality and Sustainability; in: Van der Maesen, Laurent J.G./Walker, Alan (eds.): Social Quality. From Theory to Indicators: Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan; 250-274; here: 260)

We may better speak of establishing social integrity, instead of social integration. The latter is a somewhat distinct part of the overall process. This latter may be understood as matter based in the following dimensions, captured by conditional, constitutional and normative factors.

	CONDITIONAL FACTORS	CONSTITUTIONAL FACTORS	NORMATIVE FACTORS
SHOWING	Opportunities & Contingencies	Processes	Orientation
FACTORS	Socio-Economic Security Social Cohesion Social Inclusion Social Empowerment	Personal (Human) Security Social Recognition Social Responsiveness Personal (Human) Capacity	Social Justice (Equity) Solidarity Equal Valuation Human Dignity
ASSESSMENT	Measured by Social Quality Indicators	Qualified by Profiles	Allowing Judgement
MAIN DETERMINANTS	Each factor is mainly influenced by aspects of the interaction between the two main tensions and is, therefore, especially situated in one part of the quadrangle of the constitutional.	Each factor is an outcome of processes concerning the formation of a diversity of collective identities, strongly influenced by the interplay of processes of self-realisation across two main tensions and therefore also situated in one part of the quadrangle of the conditional factors.	Each factor is influenced by the dialectic relationship between conditional and constitutional factors and is therefore providing a thread, welding the different factors together.

TABLE 2: ARCHITECTURE OF SOCIAL QUALITY

We can see (social) services – or services of general and respectively public interest in a different light: in actual fact they are not provisions but one amongst various 'instruments' of establishing and maintaining integrity of a social system.

VIII.

To say 'instrumental' may be at first sight somewhat trivial. One reason is that the term 'instrumental' suggests that 'somebody' is directly, in a mechanical way, using them in this sense; another reason is that – nevertheless – such functional perspective is of course obvious and cannot be contested. In any case, it is less trivial when we approach the consequence of such view in a radical way. On another occasions, namely in the project mentioned earlier, I suggested to speak of the 'citizenry of organisations'. This had been already proposed on another occasion, comparing different views.

	"SOCIALIST"	"INDIVIDUALIST"
"NEGATIVE"	1. client	2. user
"POSITIVE"	4. citizen/"citizenry"	3. customer

(From: Herrmann, Peter, 2007: Accessibility of Social Services – a General Matter of Assessing Services in a Social Quality Perspective; in: Herrmann, Peter/Brandstaetter, Albert/O'Connell, Cathal: Defining Social Services – between the particular and the general, Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 2007: 157-176; here: 159)

MATRIX 2: WHO STANDS IN THE SPOTLIGHT OF SERVICE PROVISION?

This had been elaborated by saying:

From here it is possible to point on different approaches to define social services.

- *In the first case the client – though assessed as individual – is defined by his social status and his/her dependency of the social system. Benefits are only accessible through his/her loyalty to the patron (historically the "landlord",*

later the paternalist capitalist entrepreneur). Still, it is a mutual obligation as the other way round loyalty obliges the landlord/paternalist entrepreneur to fulfil a patronising, somewhat merciful service to the servant ("merciful society").

- *In the second case, the user accesses a services provider as an "instrument" to overcome personal difficulties. However, it has to be mentioned that this "use" may well be imposed on the individual – this is for instance the case when we look at nursing homes where very old people who are in a state of dementia are catered for ("cont[r]act culture").*

- *In the third case a service provides help for an individual who – through the act of consumption – participates in society ("contract culture").*

- *In the fourth case it is the citizen who can claim – and put into practice – rights not only to passively participating in society but beyond this the right to actively design their own life, the life of the community they life in and the society at large ("participatory culture").[6]*

    (ibid.)

This reflects in several respects what had been presented earlier, namely the classification of services by referring to general targets *(see page 7).* However, we referred now to the mode of 'provision'. Thus – and taking both aspects together – a new set of questions is gaining relevance. They concern a multiple shift, concerned with

- what a service is about
- the beneficiary of the practice
- the how of the service practice
- the outcome of the service practice.

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[6] In a side remark it should be noted that the citizen-oriented approach still has an individualistic notion due to a certain confrontation of individual and society which can denote a "Durkheimian turn".

Exploring these points individually is only possible in an analytical perspective as the different dimensions are closely interwoven and can only be understood if taken as part of a dialectical entity.

In any case, on this occasion I want to propose a different approach, not starting by looking at the 'service' but instead by looking at the soci(et)al needs, exploring service practice from there.

IX.

As outlined earlier, social quality – understood as matter of societal integrity – is based on three, or I may suggest four, dimensions. The traditional basis of the social quality thinking refers to the conditional, constitutional and normative factors *(already presented above on page 9).* I suggest adding a dimension, namely a set of 'external conditional factors'. For the moment we may leave this by and large open – only briefly characterising them as factors positioned outside the reach that can be immediately accessed, influenced, changed by 'own' strategic activities. Tentatively we may refer to

- climate and physical environment,
- historically given circumstances,
- political decisions of foreign countries outside of 'negotiable political spaces' and
- available knowledge and technology.

In the following step this can be matched by what had been outlined before, namely (i) the degree of being controlled by immediate people's action (via the institutional[ised] control) and (ii) the consensualised normality.

X.

In a Social Quality perspective it is of crucial importance that we have to consider that in some respect social quality is relative.[7] In this perspective it can be measured by the degree to which environmental, societal, social and individual

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[7] The discussion of the question of relativism has to be postponed, not least as with this we have to consider two dimensions: assessing a concrete status and development on the one side; and comparing different entities (communicates, nations, social groups, institutions ....) on the other side.

integrity are reaching the same 'level'. Substantially we are dealing with a matter of socialisation. In terms of model building it is suggested that a value of $1 = 3(4x0.25)x0.33333333$ would express a maximum of social quality (defining this way the external conditional factors as confounding factors). This is an ideal value. A variance in one area may be compensated by an opposing variance in another area. However, an open question that has to be explored in individual cases is if and when we find a negative turning point. An example, looking at services, is institutionalisation: it may be seen as societally highly integrated, suggests in other respect however the establishment of the authoritarian regime of the total institution as known from Erving Goffman – actually modelled by utilitarian thinking and implemented in the form of the Benthamian panopticon.

Coming back to the model, we can understand in this perspective local social services as mechanisms of 'managing borders': wherever the self-sufficiency of sub-systemic integration is broken – i.e. does not match the consensually defined socialisation (e.g. problems of mismatch) or the mechanisms of mediation are broken (e.g. problems of communication, problems of miscommunication), services may come into play, aiming on re-establishing the old hegemonic interplay or on establishing a new one.

XI.

Discussing this in a perspective of political economy, reference to the regulationalist interpretation is helpful – already earlier *(page 5)* the importance of the socio-political character of the economy has been mentioned. What had been mentioned before underlines that the political interests in the context of nation building and the definition of borders emerges immediately from the possibilities found in a given economic system in respect of defining external and internal integration. As much as production of externalities is a matter of positioning a national economy within the global context of centre-(semi-)periphery relations, it is also a matter of the definition of internal borders: parallel to Rosa Luxemburg's and Hannah Arendt's discussion of 'inner clonialisation', we find an internal structuration concerned with producing externalities in relation to the process of accumulation. Although the capitalist

principle is characterising all areas and phases of life, it is also true that this interpenetration is not necessarily a matter of direct subordination. We may even speak in some respect of a relative interpenetration. Four dimensions can be made out:

- the overall pattern is defined by a core, defining the accumulation regime via its 'structural dominance' (e.g. Fordist/Taylorist system),
- it is shaping the other spheres of accumulation by demanding them as 'funcitoning supplier' (which, though they may still be family or small businesses, are structured by and depending on the requirements of but also conditions set by the core),
- both depending on areas that are not immediate part of the process of accumulation, however indispensible for the overall reproduction (in particular families, NGOs etc.)
- producing, allowing and depending areas that are completely excluded and hardly find even any kind of 'shelter' (the excluded, without rights, possibly and at most getting some kind of support resulting from mercy).

As much as this dimension of inner colonialisation establishes bridges as mechanisms of 'managing borders' (as outlined in the previous section), these bridges open potentially also new gaps and provide spaces allowing to question the existing hegemony. Such questioning is part of the wider regulative process which is on the one hand simply a matter of permanently reinforcing the hegemony of the given accumulation regime. It is important to acknowledge in this context that an accumulation regime is integrating a realm that goes much further than the 'technical' aspects of accumulation of capital. In the definition of Andre Lipietz

> *[a] system of accumulation describes the stabilization over a long*
> *period of the allocation of the net product between consumption*
> *and accumulation; it implies some correspondence between the*
> *transformation of both the conditions of production and the*
> *conditions of the reproduction of the wage earners. It also implies*
> *some forms of linkage between capitalism and other modes of*

production. [. . .] A system of accumulation exists because its schema of reproduction is coherent . . .
(Lipietz, Alain, 1986: New Tendencies in the International Division of Labor: Regimes of Accumulation and Modes of Regulation; in: Scott/Allen J./Storper, Michael [eds.]: Production, Work, Territory. The Geographical Anatomy of Industrial Capitalism; Boston/London/Sidney: Allen&Unwin: 16-40; here: 19)

Emphasising the relational aspect contained in the definition, it is getting clear that we are also talking about responsibilities and their substantial definition in relation to the different aspects of (re)production and the different forms in which they are performed.

However, on the other hand it is also a matter of exploring new productive forces, patterns of consumption and reproduction, incl. 'care' – at a later stage these may be

- integrated/subordinated – as it is for instance the case with many google products: being developed outside, in 'niches', they had been at a later stage integrated into the main body of google products
- complementing alternatives – products and services that support the mainstream accumulation, though the production and performance remains marginal
- parallel alternatives – the many niche productions, in the service sector for instance provided by self-help groups serving a very specific target group
- 'revolutionary alternatives', serving an area that claims to lead to a fundamental change – this may occur in two forms: fundamentally changing a given area, for instance the provision of new forms of chid care or fundamentally changing the provision of services as we see it currently by way of privatisation of services or the 'individualisation' of social rights for women.

Regulation emerges in this context as immediate part of the 'productive system' as regulation decides the Procrustean bed of the overall (re)production of the socio- and political-economic system.

XII.

Looking at services in the understanding of their social meaning, i.e. as mechanisms of socialisation an important facet to this debate is the increasing tension between public and private. We find a specific relationship that is characterised by the following facets:

- private wealth – understood as wealth of individuals
- private wealth as matter of relations and practice: increasing ability to act versus decreasing ability to 'control' – individual ability versus social capability
- public wealth in material terms
- public wealth in socio-spatial terms.

On the input side, it is about the radicalisation of individualist thinking: it is the individual who is responsible for him/herself and who is benefitting – ex post altruist distribution underlines this positioning, not least as the criteria for distribution are defined by the 'altruist' individual. On the output side it means the emptying of social/public spaces: it is reaching from the decrease of physical space in estates that is available as 'commons' and can be used for public, communal affairs, over the establishment of gated communities to the increase of tax avoidance (by rule breaking) etc.[8]

XIII.

This means not least that both, any given consensus and social services as instruments dealing with it are mechanisms of contest. The proposed orientation on anomie may find especially here a useful application. It is surely limited in scope as the discussion actually does only deal in a very limited way with defining the normality from which 'anomic conditions' and relevant processes

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[8] It may be asked if and in which way campaigns and measures against 'anti-social behaviour' is part of this.

are deviating. Linking it to the social quality thinking one may say, the thinking about anomy fails to clearly spell out what the point of reference is. There seems to be some 'tacit understanding of a good society', however, as consequence there is a lack of a systematic considering of the factors that allow understanding society as matter of the social in the understanding presented above (see for the definition page 2). Still, the discussion by Ferenc Bódi, Jenö Frakas and Zsuzsanna Horváth *(Bódi, Ferenc/Frakas, Jenö/Horváth, Zsuzsanna, without date [2013]: Anomie as a Thermometer of the Crisis (experiment) – Social Capacity – Phenomenon of the Complex Crisis; unpublished)* suggests methodological connectivity – complementing social quality thinking. The present proposal is to use the presented anomy analysis as point of reference for elaborating a systematic understanding of the malfunctions of the social. In the present form it is especially important for the understanding of two strategically aspects:

- the mismatches between the three pillars with the conditional, constitutional and normative factors respectively;
- the unresolved and irresolvable tensions between

XIV.

Concluding – and bringing the different aspects together by direct reference to the Social Quality architecture presented in TABLE **2** on *(page 9)* – we can say that social services as such are highly problematic. They are instruments that are at the centre of the definition of hegemonic system. The paradox is that they are actually not in the strict sense *social* services. Instead, they are usually services geared towards individuals, aiming on their socialisation in order to avoid 'anomie', the latter understood as manifestation of a gap between different parts of social and societal processes. However, they can also be instruments of truly social processes, pushing processes of socialisation further. In this understanding they are somewhat revolutionary 'instruments', challenging societal structures that are falling short of allowing people to develop their genuinely own potentials.

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