Article

Place Naming and Place Making: The Social Construction of Rural Landscape

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Abstract: A social constructivist approach has been applied in our case study analysis in order to explore the sense of place and the perception of landscape of local inhabitants. Fieldwork was carried out in three rural Hungarian microregions selected on the basis of a typology developed through statistical analysis. The central question of the study assumes that the way people name the place where they live is an expression of their sense of place and that it is related to their perceptions about narrower locality and also the general attitudes they have towards the rural or urban landscape. To prove this hypothesis, we examined, in three microregions, how people name their own living area, how they relate to the countryside and rural way of life, and how they describe their own locality in their own words (positive and negative aspects). Based on analyses, three different landscape perception types were outlined and were seen to be interconnected with three ways of place naming: (i) a "close-to-nature" perception in relation to geographical place names; (ii) a "cultural-historical" identification in connection with cultural names and (iii) "lifestyle-service" focused landscape perception linked to administrative place naming.

Keywords: rural representation; sense of place; place attachment; survey method; open-ended questions

1. Introduction

Social construction of rurality and rural landscape is a frequently analysed topic in constructivist rural sociology. Several scholars argue both in rural sociology and rural geography that rurality and rural landscape are to be regarded as social constructs. This paper does not want to rehearse this long established, several times reinterpreted and very well documented concept in rural studies [1–7] but instead focuses on one characteristic phenomenon linked to the social construction of rurality: on the notions, feelings and attitudes around locality, and on a special aspect of rurality, namely to its idyllic representation.

Although idyllic representation goes back to Tönnies [8], it became a major research topic only in the sixties, after the central research of Pahl [9] on rurality. It gained more importance in the nineties, when studies of British human geography enriched the field [10–14]. By sharing their argumentation that rural imagery is severely influenced by the middle classes, our paper also accepts the critiques' perspective that emphasises the exploration of the other side of the coin: local identity. This raises the question as to how locals constitute their own attachment to the place in which they live. At this point we build on the literature on both the social representation of the rural and the sense of place.

Our study focuses on the notions of the everyday people by using a database containing answers of local people from three rural microregions of Hungary. The case study selection was based on statistical analysis: we developed a typology and aimed at heterogeneity of the microregions in terms of economic character, civic and political activism, and their performance in terms of gaining resources from EU funds. At the same time,

we selected medium size microregions with real microregional centres. The case studies are from different regions of Hungary: Pápa (from Central-Transdanube), Szerencs (from northern Hungary) and Szentes (from the southern Great Plain).

Our paper had three main research questions. First of all, we aimed to describe and reveal the patterns involved in naming the place and to analyse the factors influencing it. Secondly, we analysed the attitudes towards to the countryside in general. Our third question explored the relationship between the naming of the locality to the subjective perception of locality and the attitudes towards the countryside in general.

By presenting an overview of everyday people's sense of place our analysis contributes new knowledge to the existing literature. Based on our analysis, we argue that naming the place is strongly linked to the locality in the three microregions.

The paper is structured as follows: firstly, we present a theoretical background and our research questions. Secondly, a detailed methodological is presented. Thirdly, the paper contextualizes results by presenting the main characteristics of the case study areas. This is followed by a results section outlining the main categories involved in naming a place and the advantages or disadvantages of the respective localities. Finally, in the discussion and conclusion section, we compare the three microregions and conclude the study.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Social Construction of Rurality and Landscape

Landscape is an essential element of rurality and rural representation. Rural and rurality have several definitions and meanings that include both positive and negative connotations, but aspects of the rural landscape, such as settlement structure, arable land, nature closeness, built environment, rural milieu etc. are always an important part of them [3,5,15]. Dominant perceptions of rurality, especially in the developed world, include both the idyllic view of rural areas and the image of a rural backward place with the permanent need for modernisation [16–19]. This twofold image of rurality is very much emphasised in Hungarian rural representation. The idyllic imaginations of rural landscapes, from the natural beauty through the community to traditions and a very problematised view of rural areas in relation to social and economic problems appear together in the perceptions of Hungarians about rurality [16,20].

Rural representations of different actors, such as the urban middle class or locals, poor people or elites, through the analysis of different discourses and mediums, such as paintings, newspapers, or professional narratives, prove the importance of the different material and cultural elements of landscape in these representations [21–23]. Changing representations of rurality also reflect on the changing functions of rural areas and parallel transformations of rural landscapes [4,11,24]. These post structuralist approaches of landscapes, with a strong focus on narratives, emphasise the importance of stories that different agents tell via words, pictures, feelings, or emotions. However narratives of landscapes have a strong effect on the material landscape itself because all narrators demand to fit the material world into their ideas [1,4,10,25–27]. DuPuis [25] has pointed out that social elites fit rural landscapes into their idyllic imagination of the rural: "elites create their identity through creating pure, idyllic landscapes devoid of rowdy teenagers, homosexuals, the homeless, or women working the land, in favour of landscapes exhibiting rurality as order, purity, middle-class prosperity, family and masculinity" [25].

Natural beauty, tiny villages and rustic houses are manifested as the main element of rural landscapes through the idyllic representation of rural. There are several analyses on rural idylls in the rural sociology literature. Scholars argue [5,7,28] that the rural idyll is created mainly by urbans, and that all elements are presented in contrast with the image of the conflicting city. Urry [29] also notes that experts, cultural brokers (usually with an urban origin) also shape our perceptions of the landscape and the region—through brochures, advertisements, all kinds of communication. The idyllic landscape of the rural is constructed through an opposition to the urban landscape. The rural landscape is in contrast with the industrial, modern, noisy, crowded urban landscape. To understand this discourse and

representation we must go back to Tönnies' theory [8] on community and society. Rural and urban are two opposing concepts. Research [30–34] shows that Tönnies' vision on the good life in the countryside is still significant in the rural representations of several social groups, even if it carries different meanings. The transformation of rural society, and the decreasing economic role of agriculture, has not affected this image. Thus, agriculture, tradition, nature, tranquillity, peace, closeness to nature are the most important characteristics of the rural landscape. Bell [7] has identified three main types of idyllic landscapes: "farmscape", which includes artisanal elements of agriculture landscape; "wildscape", which involves the ideas of pre-human and precultural wildness; and "adventurescape", which presents the rural as a place for physical activities and adventures. All types reflect the increasing consumption function of the countryside [35,36].

The idyllic representation of rurality and the rural landscape is the most important driver for both migration into rural areas and rural tourism [14,30]. Studies addressing the social representation of the rural in Hungary focus mainly on rural tourism and urban peoples' migration into rural areas. Several studies have identified the idyllic representation of the rural landscape as a pull factor in migration decisions both permanent and temporary [37]. Szíjártó [38] analysed the social constructions of rural landscape with the case of Káli basin, one of the most popular regions for artists and other urban middle class people to own a second home. The case study presents the transformation of the rural landscape and its changing social construction as a result of the image and identity building of immigrant artists. Nemes and Tomay [39] also confirm the role of the idyllic representation of the rural in the tourism gentrification process in Hungary. However, they claim that tourism-based rural development, alongside a very intensive gentrification process, results in several conflicts and the loss of rural values which are so emphasised in the rural idyll. There is little research on the general attitudes toward the countryside in Hungary. A nationally representative survey from 2005 focused on the rural image and the attitude of Hungarian society [16,20]. A block of questions focused on the morphological characteristics of the countryside, including the built and natural environment. The results of this research show that the authentic peasant house is one of the main elements of the rural image in Hungary and that the general elements of the rural idyll are also strongly accepted by Hungarian society. The research did not find strong differences between the rural image of urban (outsider) and rural (local) respondents. The idyllic image and attitude toward the rural are stronger among urban people, but the locals also strongly accept several elements of the rural idyll in their rural image. This proves that the general rural images of rural and urban people are very similar. However, we have very limited knowledge as to how locals perceive their own place and landscape and how this perception is connected to their general image and attitudes toward the rural [16].

2.2. Sense of Place and Social Construction of Landscape

The social construction of landscape is also understood through the sense of place concept in the academic literature; however it is used in very different ways in academic discussions on place-related concepts [40,41]. Sense of place is an umbrella term which refers to the formation of place identity and place attachment and includes place-specific beliefs, emotions toward the place and behaviours and habits relating to the place [42,43]. The term 'sense of place' is defined as the special characteristics of places as well as the feelings of attachment and belongings to the place [40,44,45]. According to Lew [46], a sense of place gives meaning to a geographic space when it includes all the values, traditions, perceptions, and the heritage of the people who live there. Soini at al. [47] suggest that "the concept of sense of place characterizes the complex connections people have with the environments they encounter, whereas landscape perceptions refer to the visual aspects and use value of the environment". Their study in a rural–urban fringe in Finland demonstrates the multidimensionality of place relations and emphasizes the importance of adaptability to a place as a driver for a strong sense of place in the case of urban newcomers who migrate to a rural place with a strong demand for its closeness to nature. This indicates that, not

only do the place identity and place dependence comprise a sense of place but several other components, such as emotional ties, social relations and the adaptability to that place [47].

Kyle and Chick [48] use the sense of place concept from a social constructivist point of view to describe the relations that recreationists' tenting at an agricultural fair has with place. Their results show that the place meanings are produced more through the experiences shared with friends and family in the place then the physical attributes of the place.

Sense of place also involves the aesthetic and spiritual aspects of a landscape [45,49]. The aesthetic of landscape is closely connected to the representations of the rural idyll. Smith and Csurgó [45] show, with the case of the Őrség region—a popular rural destination in Hungary—that aesthetics and cultural heritage of the natural and cultural landscape are important drivers for immigration to the area and also exert a strong influence over attachment to place, as well as the creation for tourism experiences. Blicharska [50] also notes the importance of a sense of place in tourism development.

Gailing [51] created a systematic analysis on the complex process by which landscapes are socially constructed. He identified five dimensions for the composition of the social constructions of landscapes: (1) the analytical construction by scientists, (2) the subjective construction, (3) the material constitution, (4) the collective constitution, and (5) the construction obtained through constructs 1–4. He highlighted the way in which the identified processes are interdependent. The analytical construction by scientists (1) comprises the theories and approaches of landscape such as classical landscape geography, landscape ecology or the cultural landscape approach, which implies that the landscape is a multidimensional and holistic concept. The subjective construction of landscape (2) refers to the perceptions of individuals, a way of seeing which includes all the factors that are dependent on subjective perquisitions and individual feelings and which are significantly influenced by values, norms and ideologies. The idyllic representation of landscape by urban consumers (immigrants and tourists) demonstrates very well this kind of social construction. The material construction of landscape (3) involves the natural structures of landscape such as historical and actual land use and physical objects. It refers to the landscape as some kind of product of human agency. However, the material aspects and material construction of landscape are often neglected in the social sciences. The collective constitution of landscapes (4) includes diverse perspectives which show that the landscapes are constituted through different social and cultural processes. This approach emphasizes the importance of spatial representations, landscape images, or attributions of place in the formation of individual and collective place identities, regional and local images and utopias. Finally, the construction by the constructs (5) involves all of the abovementioned constructions of landscape and confirms that its social construction is an ongoing process and that it affects individuals and societies.

The case studies examined later in this paper use the so-called collective constitution of landscape approach, including rural representations and attitudes toward the rural, and the sense of place concepts. The analysis focuses on the local inhabitants' perceptions, attitudes and experiences toward their local place and landscape.

Based on the above presented scientific literature we formulated the following research questions:

1. What are the patterns of naming the place?

    1.1. How are socio-demographic variables interconnected with naming?
    1.2. How do socio-demographic variables influence it?
    1.3. Does residence (locality) influence it?
    1.4. Does this influence exist if socio-demographic variables are controlled?

2. What are the attitudes towards the countryside in general?

    2.1. How do socio-demographic variables influence it?
    2.2. What are the subjective perceptions of an individual's place of residence (open questions)?

3. Is the naming of their locality related to their subjective perception of their locality and their attitudes towards the countryside in general?

3. Materials and Methods

To answer our research questions, we conducted surveys in three microregions of Hungary during the summer and autumn of 2022. Microregions were selected to provide variability concerning economic status, administrative region and geographical location, natural environment and social life. Attributes of the selected three microregions will be introduced in the following chapter. A non-probabilistic sample of *n* = 752 (around 250 per field) were gathered during fieldwork, with special attention paid to gender and age group quotas and settlement types (village; town) for the sample to represent well the microregion's population along these variables. Furthermore, we extended the validity of the survey research by conducting additional stakeholder interviews. The 20 min long questionnaire can be divided into two major sections: the first is focused on local identity and place-making, while, in the second section, we enquired about living conditions, employment, income, family ties, social networks as well as position within the community.

The methodological process was as follows:

(1) The first part of the questionnaire contained open questions enquiring about the strengths and weaknesses of the locality. Further, we asked respondents to provide a definition of the locality. More specifically, the following questions were phrased:

    (a) How would you name the area where you live?
    (b) What are the advantages of the locality/living in the settlement? Name three of them!
    (c) What are the problems of the locality/of the settlement? Name three of them!

The answers—usually a few words, or a sentence—were immediately transcribed by the interviewers, while the longer explanations were collected in a separate field work diary. Answers provided for the first question ('naming the place') were one name in most cases. The second and third questions ('strengths' and 'weaknesses') focus on the responses presenting the advantages and problems of the case study areas. For the second and third questions the answers were longer and we used open coding to understand the structure and content responses.

(2) Responses provided to the above open questions were, during the analytical process, categorised. Altogether four categories for 'naming the place' were received, namely:

    (a) Emotional
    (b) Geographical
    (c) Administrative
    (d) Cultural types of definition.

Further, eight main categories were received for the 'strengths', i.e., positive aspects of living locally and five for the weaknesses. Positive aspects were as follows:

(a) Economic potential
(b) Family and friendship ties
(c) Rural and town lifestyle
(d) Attractiveness of town/region
(e) Quality and accessibility of institutions and services
(f) Ties to the settlement
(g) Rural and town lifestyle
(h) Closeness to the natural environment.

Whereas negative aspects were as follows:

(a) Economic problems
(b) Village abandonment, rootlessness
(c) Community, mentality
(d) Disadvantages of the settlement

(e)   Quality and accessibility of institutions and services.

(3)   In the questionnaire we presented attitude questions for respondents regarding urban and rural life, separately. Respondents were asked in what way they considered the 19 aspects (such as tradition, safety, community, nice environment, etc.) as being integral parts of rural, and in a separate set of questions, of urban (city) life. Respondents were provided 1–5 scales for responding.

In the paper we present the links among the above survey responses and responses to the naming controlled by socio-demographic variables.

The Case Study Areas

The research was conducted in three Hungarian microregions: Pápa, Szerencs and Szentes (see Figure 1). Hungary is divided into 176 fairly heterogenous microregions. Our case study selection is based on a statistical analysis. This analysis is based on statistical data about civic activity, economic activity, received development funds, and the roles of different sectors (agriculture, industry, services) in the area. We prepared three typologies using these data. Based on these typologies we selected the three case study areas. We aimed at selecting microregions with high differences according to development activity, economic profile and civic activity, we also decided to select microregions from different regions of the country. At the same time, we selected microregions of similar sizes and each with a clear central, medium sized town. Table 1 presents the main socio-demographic characteristics of the case study areas.
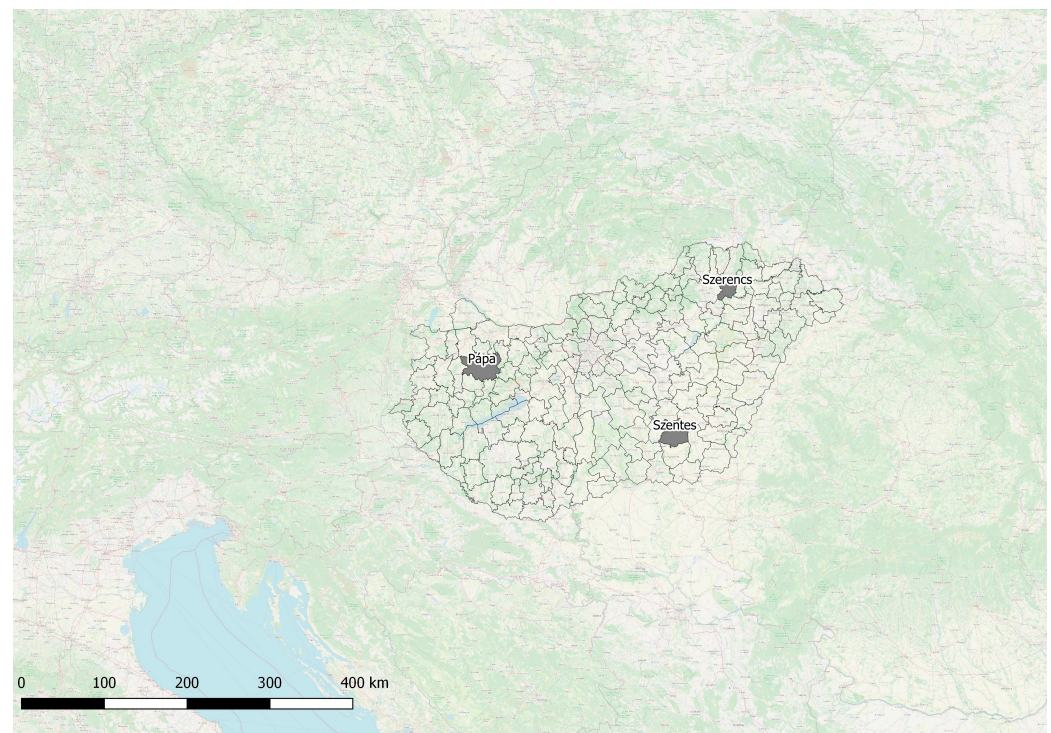

Figure 1. The location of the case study areas.

In the following we shortly present each case study area using the socio-demographic variables and refer to their main characteristics. We identified the economic character, the civic activity of the locals and the developmental activity in the microregions.

Pápa microregion does not have a clear economic character: both agriculture and industry are important. The civic activity, measured by the average number of civic associations and the activity at the elections in 2018 is higher than the country average. The area received less development sources then the national average according to our data. Economic traditions have profoundly changed in the case study area and small-scale

farming has almost completely disappeared. Most of the land is used by a large-scale dairy farm. People mostly work in the neighbouring town, where services, medical infrastructure and education is more accessible. Similar to other western Hungarian towns, Pápa is characterized by assembly plants and some food industry.

Table 1. The main characteristics of the case study areas.

Name of the Microregion	Pápa	Szentes	Szerencs
Permanent population	5725	39360	39800
Agricultural and Rural development payments (ths HUF)	12,664,557	11,512,336	8,838,648
Cohesion payments	1404.925	13,582,574	16,173,748
Valid votes in 2018 national elections	33,084	23871	19,240
Number of civic organizations	325	215	177
Number of registered producers	1586	2148	1700
Number of entrepreneurs	7340	5829	4388
EU Fund payments 2015–19	15,255,351	25,345,788	49,126,769

Source: own compilation.

Pápa microregion has three major ethnic groups: Hungarians, Gypsies and Germans (Scwaben). The villages in the eastern part of the case study area are surrounded by forests which belong to the Transdanubian mountains (the Bakony). This forested area is known for its natural heritage throughout Hungary. The forests, and also forestry itself, are a part of the local cultural heritage and local economy. Some of the settlements own forests and derive regular income from them. Additionally, some locals receive incomes from the forests as employees of a forestry company, or as owners of forests.

Locally built heritage, and cultural heritage, are also linked to religious traditions and the German ethnic minority, despite the fact that the proportion of Germans (Schwaben) is under 20% even in the settlement where this ratio is highest. Cultural festivals, school curricula and local museums still preserve this heritage.

Szerencs microregion also has a mixed economic character, but here civic activity is lower than the national average. Both voting activity and the average number of civic associations is lower than in other parts of Hungary. The share of the microregion from EU fund payments is exceptional. It is higher than the share of the other two case study microregions, but also higher than the national average. Although the villages have different economic characteristics, in all of them it is typical that lower-middle-class people work locally, while workers and poor people usually commute between the regional centre on a daily basis, the capital on a weekly basis, or sometimes work in Western Europe. The member of parliament and the mayors of the bigger settlements belong to the governing party.

Szerencs microregion is the most diverse among the three case study areas. Both geographically and in terms of population. It consists of three major parts: two villages belong to a traditional wine region, around eight are traditional manorial villages [52] and four villages were inhabited by independent peasants until the middle of the 20th century. Since then, the population of the latter four villages has changed; nowadays earlier inhabitants have moved away, and ethnic Roma people moved in. Additionally, the agriculture changed; former peasant farms were collectivized and after the changes of the regime a large-scale agricultural company, the successor of the former collective, became dominant. There is a continuous population change among the villages: the Roma people tend to move into these four former peasant villages, while the other locals move out to the other villages. It is also worth noting that the two villages belonging to the core area of the wine region are very attractive to investors from all over the country, while the other villages in the neighbourhood, the traditional serf villages, are becoming part of the agglomeration of the regional centre.

The natural environment of the case study area is similarly heterogeneous: the northern part is surrounded by hills, vineyards and some forests, this part is the target area of gentrification. The southern parts, where Roma people agglomerate, used to be a wetland between the river Tisza, and smaller channels. Here the landscape is flat and is characterized by arable crops and grasslands.

In this microregions there are three strong, but divergent cultural traditions: the traditions linked to wine, the historical memories of Ferenc Rákoczi and the freedom fight of the "kuruc", and, finally, the Jewish—more precisely the Hasidic—traditions.

Szentes microregion can be found in the Great Plain. Szentes microregion has a clear agricultural character, with huge green houses, and traditionally intensive vegetable production. Although agriculture and the food industry are traditionally strong in this area, the electronic industry is also important. Civic activity is also high in the case study area, beyond voting activity, there is a high number of civic organizations whose presence in the area is influential. The share from EU funds is around the average according to recent data. The mayor and the city council are ruled by the opposition; traditionally, Szentes is a left-wing town.

It is worth noting that nowadays there is a lack of free workforce, thus the companies organized labour immigration, and around 1000 non-European employees work in the town. Beyond these, there is also a Roma minority. Most of its population lives in the central, medium-size rural town, but at the same time this is the area where most people live in farmsteads, outside the settlements.

The landscape is flat, characterized by arable crops and scattered with many different water surfaces: rivers, ponds, creeks and channels. Locals are linked to these water surfaces as they cross parks and are used for different sport activities. Another important landscape element is the presence of greenhouses. Szentes is famous for its greenhouse industry thanks to its traditional vegetable production and the thermal springs of the area.

Traditions are linked not only to the past, but also to the present: the small town is famous among artists for its secondary school, but also for the active life of the photo club. Civic associations are very strong in this case study area.

We used a layered random sampling method. We defined quotas for the age group, settlement type and the gender of the respondents, and within the quotas we selected the respondents randomly. Despite our efforts, our sample had slightly different social-demographic characteristics than the official data. There are differences in social background indicators between the three sub-regions. A younger, higher educated, urban sample was interviewed in the Szentes microregion. The average age here is 45.8 years, which is 5 years less than the overall sample average. The proportion of people with a school leaving certificate and a degree is much higher than the averages for the other two microregions and the share of those with a high school diploma or college/university degree is relatively high (20% of the sample). The younger average age of the sample is associated with a higher proportion of unmarried, less religious and higher income residents who have no problem making ends meet. The Szentes sub-region is also the most ethnically homogeneous of the three microregions with the highest proportion of urban residents. Sixty-eight percent of the respondents live in the central town of the sub-region, a proportion that is twice as high as that for the other two investigated areas. About half of the sample have lived in their current place of residence since birth.

In the Pápa sub-region—comparing with Szentes area—a rural, older and less educated sample was interviewed. In this area the average age of the sample is the same as the average for the whole sample, i.e., 51 years. Comparing with the other two regions, this one has the highest proportion of residents who have been at school for eight years or less. Due to the relatively high proportion of older and inactive people, and because of the lower education level, both household income and average per capita income are lower than in the other two microregions and lower than the average for the whole sample. However, in terms of the subjective assessment of their financial situation, this region paradoxically displayed the best results among the areas surveyed: almost one third (26%) of respondents

said that they could "comfortably manage on their income" and another 47% that they could "get by on their income". Here, the highest proportion of Roma and Swabians, and almost 70% of the examined people, live in villages. About half of the sample have lived in their current place of residence since birth.

The Szerencs sub-region is characterised by a dichotomy, due to the different social and economic characteristics of the more and less developed areas. A contradiction can be observed regarding the relatively high proportions of both lower and higher educated people. While the sample has a relatively high rate of people with eight or fewer years of schooling, university graduates are also over-represented compared with the other two areas. Household and per capita income are in line with the overall sample average, but peoples' subjective perceptions of their financial situations are not favourable. One third of the respondents answered that they have (more or less) difficulty making ends meet, which was the highest proportion among the areas surveyed. The average age is the highest here, at 56 years, which is 5 years more than the average for the whole sample, in particular, the 61–75 age group is prominent in the sample. The higher age is associated not only with relatively high rate of lower educated people, but also with the higher proportion of widows and religious inhabitants. The sample includes both Swabians and Roma and almost 70% of the examined people live in villages—as in Pápa region.

Summarizing the above, we can conclude that the three samples show some differences regarding the age, education, income, religion, ethnicity and whether the respondent lives in a town or a village. We therefore controlled for these factors when examining the correlations with spatial identity and attachment. We also discuss this as part of our discussion of the limitations of our paper.

4. Results

4.1. Patterns of Naming the Place

The first question aimed at grasping the respondents' perceptions and attachment to the place using an associative approach by asking the locals to name the place where they live. It was an open question, to ask respondents "How would you call the area where you live?". Respondents had the opportunity to use any expression to describe their place and landscape. In cases when respondents were puzzled and hesitant, interviewers could help by giving a hint, especially for the administrative names of the microregion, for example Pápa microregion or the surroundings of Pápa microregion.

The very rich and diverse set of landscape names for each microregion were collected and coded into four main categories (see Table 2). The administrative/municipal category (1) contains labels describing the place as the name of the city or the county.

Table 2. Naming of the place by local residents.

Type of the Name	Pápa	Szerencs	Szentes
Administrative/municipal	38%	44%	42%
Geographic	59%	26%	40%
Emotional	3%	4%	7%
Cultural	0%	26%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: own compilation.

The geographic category (2) contains labels referring to either mountains, rivers, sections of the Hungarian lowland or other geographical labels. Emotional categories (3) name the studied regions with positive or negative emotional connotations, such as nicknames pointing out the insignificance of the town or labels describing personal attachments and importance. Labels in the cultural category (4) incorporate perceived historical or cultural identifications of locals with their settlement or region.

According to the results, the administrative/municipal category has a high proportion in the data. However, this can also be due to the interviewer effect. Interviewers gave hints when respondents showed hesitancy or appeared puzzled, which could potentially have led to subsequent distorting effects.

The emotional category is very rich in the context to the place perceptions but the number of answers in this category is very low in all microregions. Although the number of responses is very low everywhere, we found interesting qualitative patterns in emotional naming. The Szentes microregion had the highest number of emotional labels for naming the place. The majority of these are positive labels meaning a tiny, calm place, or a place where life is good. Labels in the two other microregions are less emotional and responses cannot be statistically analysed. However, it is still clear that the Pápa microregion has equally positive and negative responses, while the Szerencs microregion has almost entirely negative responses, such as the "shame of the country" or "Mordor".

We can see differences between microregions in the case of geographical categories too. In the Pápa microregion, the geographical name is the most frequently used label when compared with the other microregions. The hilly area, the Bakony where Pápa microregion is located, was mostly the basis of the geographical naming and this Bakony name very often appeared with positive connotations in the place naming, such as "the heart of the Bakony".

Cultural characteristics such as cultural heritage sites were important for the naming of Szerencs microregion, while in the other regions these were very rare or even totally missed. One part of the Szerencs microregion is that of the Tokaj–Hegyalja wine region, which is one of the cultural heritage sites of Hungary. This cultural heritage site role appeared in the naming with positive connotations.

Our data, the basic statistics and the qualitative analysis of the place names given by respondents show that there are differences among microregions in the naming of landscapes which are connected to the different characteristics of the microregion from the geographical location to its cultural characteristics. Our results show that the naming of the place includes the main characteristics of the landscape of the microregions. Names given by respondents can show the perceptions of and attachment to their place and landscape.

To control these findings, we focus on the found relationships in two presented variables which can be analysed statistically. The first is that it is more likely that, at the Pápa microregion, people name their place of residence using a geographic name, and the second is that it is more likely for people to use cultural names in the Szerencs microregion.

If we control these links to the main socio-demographic variables (gender, age, settlement type, educational level, religion, income, time of moving into the area) we find that these links are quite stable (see Table 3). Despite this, there is no significant difference among the microregions in the use of administrative names because, as mentioned above, the use of an administrative name is a general everywhere in the studied microregions. There are two minor exceptions from this general rule: firstly, the time at which a person moves into the area influences the use of administrative name; and, secondly, if the level of education is controlled, there is no connection between naming and microregions.

Table 3. Factors influencing the naming of a place by local residents.

		Controlled for						
	Direct	**Settlement Type**	**Gender**	**Age Group**	**Education**	**Religion**	**Income**	**Newcomer**
Emotional	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
Geographical	***	***	***	***	secondary and total	***	***	***
Administrative	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	old (+3 y) newcomers
Cultural	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***

*** Correlation significant at the 0.005 level.

We have also included in our analysis general perceptions of the countryside in order to compare them with the respondents' own perceptions of their localities and finally to contrast these with the way they name their own place. We used a rural–urban characterisation attitude series of questions, where respondents were asked to rate the extent to which 19 characteristics were typical (on a scale of 1–5) for countryside and metropolis (see Table 4). Of these questions, those related to rural areas were used for the study, given that the research sites were all rural villages or small towns. The five response options were grouped into three categories—rather typical, neutral and less typical—and then tested for significant differences between the three microregions. There were only three items for which there was no significant difference between microregions (Liberty, Bustle and Beauty of the landscape). The "Beauty of the landscape" was said to be equally true for the countryside in all three cases (mentioned by more than 80% of respondents), while the same proportion of the positive answers were given for "Liberty". However, views on "Bustle" were divided, with "neutral" and "more typical" statements predominating in connection with the countryside.

Table 4. General rural attitudes and microregions.

How Typical Are the Following Concepts of Rural Life? Give Your Answer in Numbers from 1 to 5. (Responses Grouped into Three Categories)	Correlation between Rural Attitudes and Microregions Cramer's V, Level of Significance (***) without Control Variables	Correlates with Control Variables (Controlled by Gender, Age, Education, Income, Religion, Settlement Type) *
Nice living environment	0.339 ***	yes
Liberty	0.06	no
Traditions	0.269 ***	yes
Cultural diversity	0.121 ***	no
Calm, silence	0.571 ***	yes
Nature, clean air	0.294 ***	yes
Safety	0.403 ***	yes
Creativity, innovation	0.089 *	no
Community	0.259 ***	yes
Tolerance, acceptance	0.110 **	no
Boredom	0.141 ***	no
Bustle	0.071	no
Modernity	0.331 ***	yes
Under-development	0.378 ***	yes
Overcrowding	0.085 *	no
Environmental awareness	0.615 ***	yes
Aggression, criminality	0.121 ***	no
Gossip	0.315 ***	yes
Beauty of the landscape	0.062	no

* Variables were included separately when controlling. ** Correlation significant on at the 0.05 level. *** Correlation significant on at the 0.005 level.

As the three samples differed in certain social background characteristics, we controlled the correlations for these variables (gender, age, education, income, religion, settlement type). In the following, we will focus on those rural characteristics for which the correlation with the living area (sub-region) has been maintained after controlling each variable. That is, those rural characteristics for which it has been shown that respondents, irrespective of their social characteristics, think differently about them depending on the

area in which they live. Ten out of nineteen items fall into this category (see highlighted in Table 4 (below), Figure A1, Tables A1 and A2 (Appendix A))

For the majority of the statements, it can be concluded that the responses of the inhabitants of the microregion of Pápa differ markedly from those of the other two regions. In the following, the rural characteristics that were found to be significant after controlling are grouped by theme (see Tables 5 and 6). Items can be classified into four categories: natural environment, community, lifestyle and values, and economic development.

Table 5. Percentage of respondents who consider the relevant characteristics of the countryside to be "rather" or "completely" typical. (% within microregion).

	Pápa	Szerencs	Szentes	Total
Nice living environment	85.6	36.8	35.1	53.3
Traditions	59.8	94.1	88.6	80.3
Calm, silence	97.9	18.7	10.6	43.6
Nature, clean air	90.1	46.8	50.4	63.3
Security	50.0	11.2	6.5	22.9
Community	59.9	26.7	21.3	36.3
Modernity	27.0	65.6	70.9	54.1
Under-development	8.3	43.2	39.2	29.5
Environmental awareness	10.1	96.1	95.5	66.3
Gossip	92.6	51.7	45.3	63.8

Table 6. Percentage of respondents who consider the relevant characteristics of the countryside to be "more" or "completely" typical. (% within categories).

	Pápa	Szerencs	Szentes	Total
Nice living environment	56.4	20.3	23.3	100.0
Traditions	25.9	34.9	39.2	100.0
Calm, silence	78.7	12.6	8.6	100.0
Nature, clean air	50.1	21.5	28.4	100.0
Security	75.3	14.6	10.1	100.0
Community	57.3	21.8	21.0	100.0
Modernity	17.2	36.3	46.4	100.0
Under-development	9.9	42.6	47.5	100.0
Environmental awareness	5.2	43.2	51.5	100.0
Gossip	51.0	23.9	25.1	100.0

In terms of the natural environment, the surveyed locations can be divided into two groups: the Pápa microregion, at the foot of the Bakony mountains, stands out clearly from the other two microregions in relation to these claims. Here, a much higher proportion of people said that the statement "Nice living environment" is typical for the countryside, with more than twice as many people (86%) agreeing with this characteristic than in the Szentes and Szerencs areas. Respondents of Pápa microregion were also unanimous (90%) in agreeing that "Nature and good air" are typical of the countryside, although the proportions were also quite high in the other areas (around half of the responders).

The results for community and rural lifestyle and values measured in the Pápa microregion also differ from the other places: here, people mainly agree with the "traditional" rural image (cf. Tönnies), where the strength of the community is strong and there is safety, calm, and quiet. Half of the respondents in the Pápa microregion said that "Safety" is

typical of the countryside, while this rate was extremely low in the other two microregions. The difference is even more striking in relation to the characteristic of "Calm, quiet", where almost all respondents in the Pápa area (98%) said that this was a typical characteristic of rural areas, while in the other two microregions people mostly disagreed with this. In terms of "Community", the Pápa microregion stands out again with positive responses: 60% of respondents said it was a general feature, while 'Gossip'—which is characteristic of small and closed communities (cf. Granovetter)—was considered typical of the countryside by almost all respondents (93%) from this area.

"Tradition" was seen as a typical feature of the countryside in each microregion, but to varying degrees. Within the sub-region, the highest proportion was measured in the Szerencs microregion, where 94% of respondents considered this characterization to be typical. This proportion was also high in the Szentes microregion (87%), but slightly lower in the Pápa microregion (60%). Although it seems counter-intuitive, beside the traditions, "modernity" was also perceived as characteristic of the countryside by the vast majority of respondents in the Szerencs (65.6%) and Szentes (70.9%) microregions, more than twice as many as in the Pápa microregion.

Rural "Underdevelopment" divided respondents. The highest proportion of respondents in the Szerencs microregion felt this characterization to be true (43.2%), while almost as many felt it was neutral (36.2%), with similar proportions found in the Szentes area. The least likely to feel that rural "Underdevelopment" is typical were the inhabitants of the Pápa microregion (only 8% said it was typical). On "Environmental awareness", there is again a fault-line between sub-regions. While respondents in the Szerencs and Szentes microregions were unanimous in saying that it was a typical (around 96%) rural feature, in the Pápa microregion the vast majority of respondents did not agree with this (see also Figure A1 and Tables A1 and A2 in the Appendix A).

4.2. Subjective Perception of Residence

Matching categories turned up from the data for the positive and negative aspects of settlements (see Table 7). The economic aspect turned up as either a potential problem or a problem, relating to employment and local development opportunities. Family and friendship ties highlight the strength that locals have in their own settlement; however, as a negative aspect, strong demographic problems arose due to aging and migration of the younger generations to economically more prosperous regions. The community also appeared as a pair. On the positive side, locals appreciate the close network that a small town or village can provide, however, people with different values or living standards, who appear as unfit for the community, indicated strong negative associations with small towns or villages. Attractiveness and disadvantages are both mentioned by respondents in relation to traffic infrastructure, cityscape, public safety and integration of Gypsies. Finally, the quality and accessibility of institutions and services appeared in the positive and negative polarity, as well. This category incorporated the leadership of the settlement and the commercial, public service, cultural/recreational facilities subcategories.

Some responses were collected into categories that had only positive aspects (see Table 8). Firstly, the ties to the settlement emerged as a main category with four subcategories. Respondents mentioned ties to their settlement due to the fact that they were born in the region and, during their childhood, they developed personal ties. Others highlighted their feeling of becoming used to their environment and the feeling of boundedness to the soil. The lifestyle of a small town or village emerged as a main category with two positive aspects, namely the calm and peacefulness. Additionally, the closeness of the natural environment, the regional landscape, the hilly region and the clean air were also part of the responses but only as positive aspects.

Table 7. The main categories and subcategories.

The Subcategories of Negative Aspects	The Main Categories of Positive Aspects	The Main Categories of Negative Aspects	The Subcategories of Negative Aspects
Employment	Economic potential	Economic problem	Employment
Developments			Developments
Family	Family and friendship ties	Village abandonment, rootlessness	Aging, migration
Friendship			
Community	Rural and town lifestyle	Community, mentality	Community
Traffic infrastructure	Attractiveness of town/region	Disadvantages of the settlement	Traffic infrastructure
Townscape			Townscape
Public safety			Public safety
Roma integration			Roma integration
			Public transport
			Communal infrastructure
			Tourism
Local government	Quality and accessibility of institutions and services	Quality and accessibility of institutions and services	Local government
Retail services			Retail services
Public services			Public services
Recreation			Recreation
Local born	Ties to the settlement		
Accustomed			
Like it here			
Cultural identification			
Lifestyle	Rural and town lifestyle		
Peacefulness			
Landscape	Close natural environment		
Clean air			
Nature			

Table 8. Main positive and negative aspects of living in an area (%).

Pápa	Szerencs	Szentes	Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects	Pápa	Szerencs	Szentes
4	10	5	Economic potential ***	Economic problem ***	15	40	19
13	10	10	Family and friendship ties	Village abandonment ***	7	7	9
12	11	9	Community/mentality		12	7	7
8	12	15	Attractiveness of town/region ***	Disadvantages of the settlement ***	32	22	30
13	8	14	Quality and accessibility of institutions ***		17	17	32
8	14	7	Ties to the settlement ***				
23	20	28	Rural and towns lifestyle				
17	14	13	Close nature environment				

*** Correlation significant on at the 0.005 level.

If we analyse these expressions at a case study level, we find some telling similarities and also some differences (see Table 8). There were three expressions which were considered good in the locality: the presence of family and friendship ties, the way of life in a small town, and the nice natural environment. Here, there was also a shared negative aspect of living in a small town: the unfavourable mentality of the community. It is worth noting that these are quite stable patterns; even after controlling for gender, settlement type, age, level of education, religiosity, income and time of moving into the area, there are no differences among the three microregions. After controlling for the abovementioned socio-demographic variables, the disadvantages of the settlement also seem to be equally typical for all three of the case study areas.

Despite these similarities, there are a number of differences in opinions about the advantages and disadvantages of the localities. These differences seem to be unstable; after controlling for the differences at a microregional level for the socio-demographic variables, we found that most of these differences disappear, or became less general. In the following we focus on the differences which remain even after controlling for socio-demographic variables in the three case study areas.

Negative associations of the respondents with the Pápa microregion are lower than in the other two microregions. If we look at the most frequently mentioned positive characteristics of the area, we see that these positive characteristics are not significantly different from the other two areas. According to the open-ended questions, Pápa seems to be a quiet and pleasant place to live without economic or demographic ups and downs. Locals value the close natural environment, its attractiveness and also the specific elements of the "regional landscape" (such as mountains or lakes), the "clean air" and also the rural lifestyle.

Strong cultural identification with the region of Tokaj–Hegyalja or the Tokaj wine region was also mentioned by respondents in the Szerencs microregion. Here, respondents predominantly mentioned economic problems, the general disadvantages of the settlements (although this item was mentioned the least in this area), and on the positive side they value most the rural lifestyle (similarly to the other two case study areas). There are two characteristics of the microregion that are significantly different from those of the other two microregions: economic potential (mentioned 10 times) and ties to the settlement (mentioned 14 times).

The Szentes microregion seems to be a land of contradictions: locals here most frequently named the area as attractive, but also as a disadvantageous area. The perception of community is also ambiguous: it was mentioned as a positive and a negative aspect. Village abandonment seems to be the most urgent problem in this area according to the responses, as it was mentioned 9 times.

5. Discussions

A social constructivist approach has been applied in our case study analysis to explore the sense of place and the perceptions of landscape among local inhabitants in three rural microregions in Hungary. Previous studies have mostly focused on the landscape construction of outsiders, such as urban migrants and tourists, who are significantly influenced by the rural idyll ideologies [25,37,38,47]. Their sense of place is affected by their actual experience in a certain place [47,48]. However, the sense of place also constitutes place identity and place dependence.

Our hypothesis is that the way we name the place where we live is an expression of our sense of place. It is related to the perceptions about our narrower locality and the attitudes we have towards the rural or urban landscape. To prove this hypothesis, we examined the way in which people of three microregions name their own living area (in their own words), how they relate to the countryside and rural way of life, and how they describe their own locality in their own words (positive and negative aspects). We looked for a statistical correlation (i) between their living area and self-naming, attitudes towards the countryside, and opinions about their locality and (ii) between self-naming and their attitudes and opinions.

As a first step we asked the local respondents to name the region where they live and our result shows that the process of naming a place might involve the social construction of

a landscape. We have identified four different types of place naming such as (1) Administrative/municipal, (2) Geographic, (3) Emotional and (4) Cultural (Table 2). We found that the types of place naming are (i) interconnected to the characteristics of the place/microregion perceived by local inhabitants that we analysed through the questions about the regions' advantages and disadvantages and (ii) are also interconnected with their general attitudes toward the countryside. This is supported by the quantitative analyses, which show that the naming of the locality is correlated with a significant proportion of attitudinal questions, as well as with subjective characteristics (see Tables 3–6) and that all three of the questions correlate with the subregion where respondents live. This means that naming expresses and encapsulates subjective perceptions of the locality of inhabitants and representations toward their landscape, includes the main characteristics of the microregions where they live and even links with perceptions of the countryside. Analysing together the responses of the three questions may provide a special insight to the social construction of a landscape, and develop a coherent picture region by region.

The benefits of the natural environment are strongly emphasised by residents in the Pápa area, where the geographical naming of the place is the most common. The vast majority of local residents interviewed used the mountain range of the "Bakony" that borders the region, or terms referring to its northern slopes (e.g., "bottom of the Bakony", "edge", "foothills") to describe the place where they live. The importance of the natural environment was supported both by respondents' own verbal positive descriptions of their own settlement and by their answers to attitude questions about the countryside and lifestyle. In both questions, the same elements emerged, with a high number of mentions: "nice living environment", "nature" and "clean air". This "close-to-nature self-image" is combined with a more traditional definition of a rural community (quiet, peaceful, safe rural life) and with less emphasis on modernity and economic awareness.

In the case of Szerencs we can see that local inhabitants—when compared with those of the other two regions—relatively often use a cultural naming (such as historical wine region) for the region. This is interconnected with the emphases on the cultural and historical uniqueness of the place as a reason that they like to live there. This outstandingly high "cultural-historical" identification is made up almost exclusively from the Tokaj–Hegyalja or Tokaj wine region labels. Not only is this cultural identification linked to the wine production and its historically ingrained characteristics but it is also traceable in the perception of locals on their region when they name some of the positive aspects of their localities. In terms of positive aspects related to their locality, the proportion of responses categorised as "ties to the settlement" was higher than in those of the other two subregions. This means that being born in a place, as well as cultural identification, are particularly important to the respondents. In terms of attitudes towards the countryside, there is also a dichotomy in the perception of the countryside, where tradition and modernity and development and backwardness are both present. This can be explained by the relatively high level of developmental resources (a significant share of development funds is channelled into tourism and cultural development in the region) flowing into the respondents' own regions, and by the poverty in parts of the region, which affects their overall perception of the countryside.

The administrative-centred naming of a place, and especially the name-centred naming rhyme for Szentes, places a strong emphasis on the role of the small town within the landscape's characteristics—characteristics such as "smalltown milieu", or green urbanisation—as one of the main advantages of the region. Based on the open-ended questions about their own locality, the picture that emerges is that Szentes is a place where there is opportunity for a quiet, peaceful life, is a perfect location for raising children and that there is good community. Furthermore, town services, a general satisfaction with services and utilities, tidiness, traffic infrastructure and public safety were types of responses given most frequently in the Szentes region as positive aspects compared with the other fields. The result of the attitude questions shows primarily that the rural image of inhabitants is linked to nature and good air. However, it is also evident that this microregion stood out from the others in terms of its perceived modernity and environmental awareness. This is largely

attributed to the specificity of the countryside; however, at the same time, tradition is also considered to be a strong characteristic of the region. This apparent incongruity can be explained by the coexistence of two different lifestyles at the same place, namely the one related to the traditional rural agricultural production and the other related to the urban life, idealized by the younger generation. Therefore, it is not surprising that the younger respondents hardly ever mention agricultural production as one of the positive aspects of the region but instead the need for more urban services.

To summarise the above, three different landscape perception types were outlined and found to be interconnected with three ways of place naming: (i) a "close-to-nature" perception in relation to geographical place names; (ii) a "cultural-historical" identification in connection with cultural names and a (iii) "lifestyle-service" focused landscape perception linking to administrative place naming.

6. Conclusions

Our results confirm the importance of a multidimensional approach in the analysis of a sense of place [47], one which gives methodological significance to our research. The positive perceptions and representations of place are indicated by the responses to the question "Why do you like to live in this region"? Responses to this question include several aspects of a rural idyll, from community to nature. The subjective construction [51] of landscape can be seen through the perceived advantages of the place. However, questions about the problems cloud the picture and a much more objective and materialistic construction of landscape is required. By analysing these responses together with attitudes towards the general image of the countryside, we can get an even more complex picture of the construction process that determines our own sense of place and attachment.

It is worth noting that the answers to the open-ended questions and the attitudes emerging from the row of statements on general attitudes about living in a rural area correspond. Analysing the answers to the open-ended questions, we found similar categories which were rated later as different dimensions of rural life.

Different forms of community emerged in the open-ended questions: family, friendship ties, but also loneliness and village abandonment. Similarly, development issues also appeared among the open-ended questions, such as the elements associated with a rural idyll; closeness to nature and the ties to the settlement.

Despite the commonalities, there were also some dimensions of rural life which seem to be less important if we consider the answers to the open-ended questions. Aggression, criminality, creativity and innovation, and liberty are less frequently mentioned characteristics of rural life, from either a positive or a negative aspect. A possible explanation for this is that these dimensions are more likely to be linked to urban living.

In the positive side, the characteristics of the Tönnies [8] "village"—community, relationships, silence, tranquillity—are strongly presented in all three of the microregions. On the basis of these results, and complementing the previous theories [5,7,28], it can be said that it is not only urban intellectuals who have an idyllic image of the countryside, but also that locals in general have a more nature-oriented, community-based view of rural life as opposed to the urban lifestyle. However, this "idyllic view" is counterbalanced by negative "hard" factors, such as emigration, economic problems, and lack of institutions, which points to the changing functions of the countryside. These opposite approaches for place perceptions, affirming both positive and negative characteristics of the place, confirm that the landscape is constructed through different and often opposite social and cultural processes, or, as Gailing [51] presented it, represents the collective constitution of the landscape. The positive and negative elements of place representation and sense of place deal with very similar issues, such as community, economy, townscape, etc., which highlights the significance of the particular processes and phenomena in a particular place. These results also point to way in which the changing nature of rural representations reflects the changing functions and parallel transformation of rural landscapes [4,11,24].

There are several limitations of our analysis, including the way in which open-ended questions in a survey do not provide the deepest insight into the social construction of a sense of place, or how an interviewer might influence the answer to the open-ended questions, especially in the case of naming the place question. Nevertheless, our results prove that the naming of a place represents the sense of that place. The social construction of landscape can be explored through the naming of the place together with some open-ended questions about the main characteristics of that place. Our analysis suggests the use of a multidimensional approach in sense-of-place analysis, one which refers to multiple forms of the social construction of a place, including individual feelings towards that place, place-based experiences, social representations, place dependence and place identity. Our results also suggest that we can use place naming as a platform to explore sense of place in research with different methodological approaches.
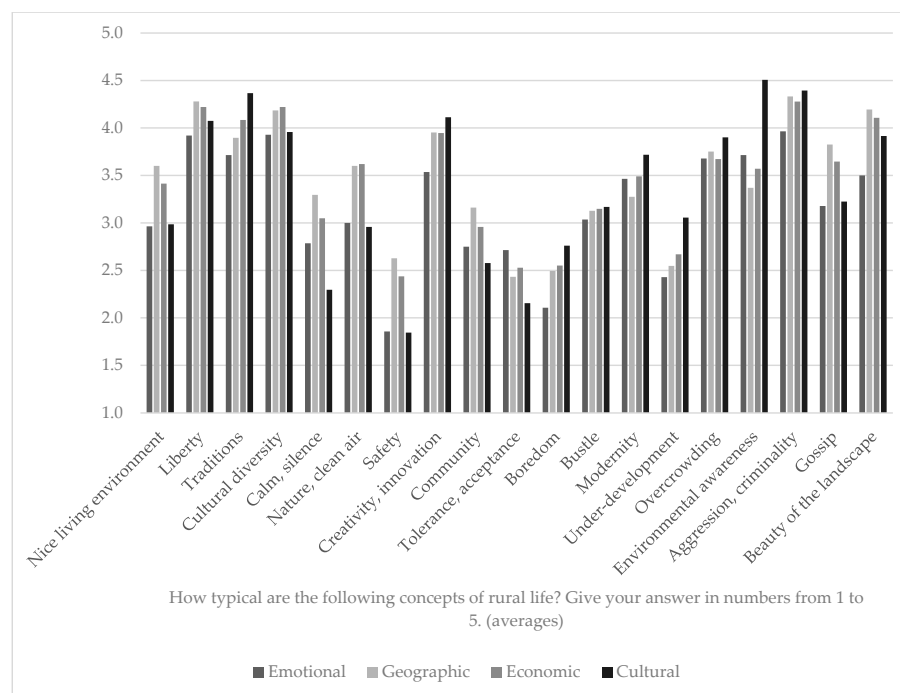
Appendix A

Figure A1. Interaction between 'naming the place'—categories and attitudes regarding rural life.

Table A1. Attitudes toward rural life.

How Typical Are the Following Concepts of Rural Life? Give Your Answer in Numbers from 1 to 5. (Responses Grouped into Three Categories)	Correlation between Naming Their Living Area and Attitudes toward the Countryside, Level of Significance (***)	Correlates under Control (Controlled by Gender, Age, Education, Income, Religion, Settlement Type, Time of Moving into the Area) *
Nice living environment	0.124 ***	yes
Liberty	0.076	
Traditions	0.1 *	some subsamples
Cultural diversity	0.60	
Calm, silence	0.150 ***	yes
Nature, clean air	0.124 ***	yes
Safety	0.147 ***	yes
Creativity, innovation	0.92	
Community	0.101 *	some subsamples
Tolerance, acceptance	0.84	
Boredom	0.85	
Bustle	0.036	
Modernity	0.088	
Under-development	0.105 *	some subsamples
Overcrowding	0.078	
Environmental awareness	0.182 ***	yes
Aggression, criminality	0.093	
Gossip	0.116 **	yes
Beauty of the landscape	0.103 *	some subsamples

*** Correlation significant at the 0.005 level. ** Correlation significant at the 0.05 level. * Variables were included separately when controlling.

Table A2. Positive ű aspects of living in an area.

What Do You Consider a Positive Aspect of Living Here?	Correlation between Naming Their Living Area and Described Positive Aspects of Locality (Chi^2)
Family ties, friends	3.39
Attachment to the locality, to the settlement	9.94 **
A love for rural/town life	12.72 ***
Nature	9.61 **
Charm of the settlement/region	6.62
Economic potential, employment, development	3.31
Quality institutions and services, reachability	5.14

*** Correlation significant at the 0.005 level. ** Correlation significant at the 0.05 level.

Table A3. Negative aspects of living in an area.

What Do You Consider a Negative Aspect of Living Here?	Correlation between Naming Their Living Area and Described Negative Aspects of Locality (Chi^2)
Economic problems	5.57
Demographic problems	3.27
Community, mentality	1.49
Settlement disadvantages	3.10
Low quality institutions and services, reachability	2.26

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