Abstract
The authors have analysed the symbolic representations of the European Union (EU) image in Hungary after the accession process. In the second part of their paper, they have analysed visual symbols and main topics of the electoral campaign of the 2009 EP elections in Hungary. They have collected and analysed the posters, the slogans, the TV spots and other campaign-tools of the Hungarian political parties. They have analysed the following aspects of the campaign: what was thematized in connection with the EU? Which were the main topics in the campaign? How the character elements of the Hungarian campaign were connected with the common European tendencies? They have registered the role of the gender and social image of the candidates. They show the main frontiers between the parties, the binary oppositions, the slogans, and some examples of the “battle of graffiti”. These symbolic elements may reflect hidden aspects of the political culture and changes in society.

Keywords: symbols, political anthropology, sociology of politics, electoral campaign, European Union, Hungary

Introduction
We have analysed the symbols and communication of values of the parliamentarian elections – mostly the campaign clips, TV spots, posters and slogans of the parties competing in the general elections -- since the first free elections in Hungary. (1990). We repeated this analysis in 1994, 1998, 2002 and 2006. (See Kapitány and Kapitány 1990, 1994, 1998, 2003, 2007) We have used the methods developed in this longitudinal research to examine the propaganda materials of the 2004 (first) Hungarian EP-election, and the accession celebrations. (Kapitány and Kapitány, 2005). We have used the method of content analysis in analysing the main topics of the campaign, the central values, aims, human needs, and the most important symbols: the symbolic role of colours, sounds, music, lights, personalities (number, gender, social status, age of the people presented, clothes and their entire physical appearance), backgrounds, decorations, objects, other visual effects, language style, slogans, some dimensions of party-image (potential social basis, friends and enemies of the party, general image and changes in the image of the party) and some dimensions of possible oppositions (left/right;
past/present/future; nation/Europe/globalisation; the role of foreigners, religion and religious symbols). These symbolic elements may reflect hidden aspects of the political culture and changes in society.

In 2009 we analysed the propaganda materials of the second EP-election by the same methods. In another research we have analysed the visual symbols of educational institutions (schools, high schools, and nurseries), cultural institutions (libraries, clubs, village halls, cinemas, and theatres), religious institutions (churches, parishes), institutions of power (local government buildings, council offices, party headquarters), catering establishments (restaurants, cafés, pubs). In this research we took approx. 30 000 photos of 3000 institutions in Hungarian cities and villages in the eighties, and approx. 20 000 photos of 500 institutions in Hungarian cities and villages in 2005. (Kapitány and Kapitány, 1989, 2006b) On the basis of these researches we can demonstrate some elements of the symbolic representation of EU in Hungary.

**Visual symbols of EU in Hungarian institutions**

There are very few visual symbols which represent the EU-image. The most frequent (almost the single) symbol is the EU flag with the stars. The EU flag can be seen on different state and local institution buildings over the gate and in the representative rooms of the institution. In general we can see them together with the national tricolour and the flag of the city, village or district. (*Figure 1*) It symbolises the (triple) spheres of territorial identity: the local, which is inside the national, which is inside the Union. (In Hungary the importance of the locality and regionality has also increased after the so-called system change, parallel with the EU-accession and globalisation process). There are some situations, where the flags have a double meaning: in nurseries and schools the EU-flags (and the national flags of other EU-member countries) have an educational function (they take part in the socialisation of children as citizens of the EU). (*Figure 2*) In restaurants the message of different national flags (on the table) is respect shown for guests from other countries, the EU-flags presume those guests, who identify themselves as “Europeans”, or emphasise: “we are all Europeans”. (*Figure 3*) We can often see the stars of the EU-flag on car number plates, on the posters and flags of some political parties (who identify themselves as representatives of the EU – and globalisation -- in Hungary). We can meet EU-emblems and textual information on the EU on notice boards in council halls. (*Figure 4*) Another important symbol of the EU is the map which differentiates the EU-members from the others. (These maps are mainly in schools). (*Figure 5*) Sometimes we
can meet other symbols of the EU. The motto: Unity in Diversity, the Ode to Joy as the anthem of the EU, 9th of May as Europe-day, or mentioning the “cultural capital” of the EU (in 2010 a Hungarian city, Pécs is also one of these “cultural capitals”). An interesting symbol was the so-called EU-tree: some Hungarian cities planted saplings on the day of accession (in 2004).

(Figure 6) In the Hungarian capital, Budapest, a so-called “time-wheel” and a huge hourglass were put up, which started counting time at the exact time of the EU-accession, (but this machine broke some months later). And one of the main symbols is the “Euro” as an expected (or less expected) currency for Hungary.

But we can summarise: there are very few real symbols, and the majority of them are mainly (and only) official symbols (and much rather signals, emblems, than real symbols). They don’t have connections to real stories, to marks of history, joined with emotional associations; visual impressions of personal experiences.

The existing Pan-European spaces: Brussels, Strasbourg, etc. are not very meaningful. The Berlin Wall – and its fall -- is relatively meaningful (in Hungary, too), in connection with the demolition of the Hungarian border in 1989. (“European picnic”). However the Hungarian Socialist Party tried to monopolise the glory of these events and for this reason this symbol doesn’t really exist for everybody.

The five years of Hungarian EU-membership has not been symbolically very suggestive for the majority of society. The EU means being able to travel without a passport, to get money (by tendering), to get jobs abroad, it means an exchange of students (Erasmus), but it doesn’t mean a real community, a real societal unit for the majority of Hungarians. The everyday work of the EU-parliament is “very far” and it doesn’t play a direct role in the everyday life of Hungarian people. The EU as a real societal “project” is not (or only a little bit) perceptible in everyday life.

So the associations, which encircled the EU at the minute of accession, were changed. In 2004 we could find mainly positive associations in connection with the EU, as: future, youth, Europe without borders, liberty of enterprises, cultural diversity and tolerance, etc. Europe was “the West” for Eastern European citizens (and it meant the “free world” and welfare societies). Most of the Eastern countries defined themselves as a bridge (between East and West, North and South) and as a country inside Europe. Hungarian people hoped to resolve their national problems (as the problems of Hungarian minorities in the neighbouring countries) although they were a little bit anxious for example about the future of Hungarian agriculture – as the
traditionally core section of Hungarian economy. But Europe appeared at that time mainly as a cohesive force. In 2009 the problems became more visible, and the associations about the EU became more ambivalent. The migration of the young generation and intellectuals; (in general: the problems of migration); the crisis of western economy and society, the increasing presence of criminality, increasing intolerance and problems of cohesion were thematized. The inner problems seemed to be more serious: domestic political confrontations, increasing unemployment, the problems of the Hungarian gypsies (Roma), and the crisis of the Hungarian agriculture. (In this process the standards, norms and limits of EU frequently thematized as negative attributes). The metaphor “bridge” was followed by “Hungary as a passage-way” and the feeling “we are inside” was supplied by the experience to be on the periphery.

EP elections, Hungary, 2009

The main topics
This atmosphere determined the setting of the agenda in connection with the EU before the 2009 elections. The main themes were in the media and in the communication by political parties on the one hand themes of domestic politics, and on the other hand “technical” questions of the EU. On the one hand questions, which are very important for the men in the street, and on the other hand questions, which are important for professional politicians. On the one hand there was the question of accession to the “Euro-zone”, the question of the position of the Hungarian agriculture in the EU, and questions such as How is the “social status” of Hungary developed compared to the other countries? Do we have to catch up with Europe or have we always been a part of Europe? Are we inside? Are we outside? Are we inside but as “second class” citizens of Europe? And on the other hand there are questions such as Who will be the Hungarian EU-commissioner? Which factions will adopt the different Hungarian parties?

The political parties used the campaign above all as a rehearsal for the 2010 Hungarian parliamentary elections.

What was thematized by the posters and campaign films in connection with the EU?

At first we present the special themes which were mentioned by different Hungarian parties in connection with the EU. (There were six parties which played a role in the campaign: MSZP
(Hungarian Socialist Party), SZDSZ (Alliance of Free Democrats – Liberal Party); FIDESZ (Young Democrats, the member of the group of the European People’s Parties); MDF (Hungarian Democratic Forum -- a Conservative Party), Munkáspárt (Workers’ Party = old-fashioned communists); Jobbik (a Radical Right Wing Party); LMP (“Possibility for an Alternative Politics” – a Green Party).

**MSZP (Socialist Party):**
They emphasised a) the importance of the representation of Hungarian interests in the EU (as their own “mission”). b) equal opportunities for women (as a common European goal); c) the energy-problem as a common European problem care.
They use very few visual symbols.

**SZDSZ (Liberal Party):**
They emphasised a) the importance of locality, regional and communal policy, local tasks by the help of the EU (some examples: “we make our district more secure by the adaptation of European norms”; “a new bridge over the Danube: we can build it with the help of the EU”); b) the importance of European security; c) “We are at home in Europe”; d) Hungary will be really “European” or it will be “Balkanised”. “Budapest is the face of Hungary, you can decide, which face of Budapest could be seen by Europe”.
On a poster (as on a visual illustration of the previous slogan) we can see a peaceful boy with a bike on Heroes Square of Budapest versus cars aflame in the street (set on fire by political demonstrators or football-hooligans); on another poster we can see the feet of a crowd starting to paint the town red versus a kissing young couple.
Another visual symbol (used by them): blue Hungary on a big map of Europe (Figure 7) = blue is the colour of this party, too – they suggest: the Liberal Party and Europe are the same (“this party is the main representative of Europe in Hungary”). But: the visual message is ambivalent. Its intended meaning is that Hungary is an interior part of Europe; but it has an unwanted meaning, too: the big EU swallows the small Hungary. Or: Hungary is a hole in the body of Europe.

**Munkáspárt (Communists):**
a) The implicit message of their texts is that the EU means the power of multinationals, and worse life-possibilities for the majority of people. b) They propose that Hungary should give up NATO membership.
They use very few visual symbols.

**Jobbik (Radical Right-wing Party)** (The meanings of the word “Jobbik” are: either “the Right” or “the Better”):

They emphasised, that a) Krisztina Morvai (the first person on the list of candidates of the party) is “the voice of Hungary in Europe”; b) “we shall conquer Europe again”.

The visual attachment to this slogan is an equestrian sculpture of Árpád, the first Hungarian prince (Figure 8) The text beside the picture is the following: “I’m Árpád, I am 1160 years old, they say I am extremist and a neo-nazi; make me proud of you again”.

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Besides the party campaign there was an “official” campaign, too (to motivate people to vote). The official posters were completely uninteresting, sometimes they were not understandable.

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As we mentioned above, the campaign was primarily about domestic politics: very few visual associations were presented in connection with the EU and there were only some visual elements in general; most of them were only emblematic signs or visual presentation of binary oppositions of domestic political frontlines.

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**The main domestic topics of EP-election campaign 2009**

**MSZP (Socialist Party):**

1. “Why would property tax be right? Because richer people give more to the community”. “Why would the cutback of personal income-tax be right? Because working people can keep more money”. 2. Equal opportunities for (Hungarian) women! 3. We ensure the safety of energy-supply (for Hungarian homes) – (this was a reaction to the Russian—Ukrainian gas-crisis); 4. They showed some documents of the history since the so called system-change: taking down the barbed-wire fence (Iron Curtain), the accession to the EU, ribbon cutting ceremony of different objects, the emergence of extremist movements, the world crisis, political diversification – and a final summary of this campaign film: it is necessary to stand by the Left, and the Left will resolve the problems; 5. They suggested a policy supposedly on the side of the “People” – the majority of the public opinion asserts just the opposite --; they have a last straw: “you must stand by us, vote for the Left”…

Their campaign was a typical governmental party campaign.
FIDESZ (People’s Party):
1. They emphasised the importance of family life; 2. They suggested: they were against lying, corruption, unemployment and rising taxes. Their campaign was a typical opposition party campaign.

SZDSZ (Liberal Party):
1. Who may come to a decision about the future, about the economy, about laws? 2. The “excluders” deny the equality and freedom of 2 million people (gypsies, homosexuals and lesbians, Jews, drug-consumers, alternative thinkers). But – as the text of the Liberal Party’s TV-spot says --: “They are not traitors, but they are men who like their own homeland; they are not born criminals, but they are Cathy, Steve, Pete; they are not perverted people, but they are each other’s partners; they are not parasites of the nation, but they are compatriots with a common history; they are not drug consumers, but they are free people; they are not “others”, but they are thinking in an alternative way; they are not enemies, but they are Hungarian citizens of the EU”.

The main message of the SZDSZ’ campaign was the protection and defence of minorities (their argument was built upon typical prejudices, and they suggest the opposite of these prejudices). But another trait of their campaign was the emphasised image of the enemies (extreme right movements).

MDF (Conservative Party):
They featured George von Habsburg, and Lajos Bokros (ex-finance minister of the socialist government 1994-1998, the father of the so called shock-therapy) emphasising their expertise, their professional competence. 2. This party brought economic questions into focus; the suggestion of this campaign was that they were the representatives of the utilitarian, bourgeois thinking. 3. They presented their candidates as “everyday men” (the candidates appear as sportsmen, as family men or as passers-by), they emphasized that these candidates are not different from other people, except for their professionalism.

Jobbik (Radical Right):
They claimed the protection of Hungarian land property, and Hungarian interests against the multinationals and strangers. 2. They emphasised the importance of public order, and they wanted to re-establish the gendarmerie (which committed itself during the right-wing era between the First and Second World War).
Their features are *traditionalist, protectionist, nationalist*; this is an *order-orientated party*.

**LMP (Green Party):**
1. Their campaign film focused on environmental protection; (they showed a horrific picture of pollution); they emphasised the importance of alternative energies, “green” workplaces, public transport, and sustainability; 2. They emphasised the importance of social justice, non-violence and other liberal values.
   They are a *pacifist, left-wing green party*.

**Munkáspárt (Communists):**
1. They built on the nostalgia of Kadar’s socialism (free medical service, free education, full employment). 2. They emphasized the protection of Hungarian workers and farmers against the multinationals.
   This party is the representative of the old *state-socialist regime*.

FIDESZ, MDF, Munkáspárt, Jobbik and LMP (all of the *opposition* parties) emphasized their *struggle against corruption*.

**The role of Gender**
It can be interesting to notice the proportion of male and female participants in a campaign.

**SZDSZ (Liberal Party):** their candidates were only men

**MSZP (Socialist Party):** they had a lot of female candidates

**MDF (Conservative Party):** Mrs. Ibolya Dávid, the leader of the party was in the centre

**LMP (Green Party):** a young lady as a spokesperson was in the centre

**Jobbik (Radical Right):** Mrs. Krisztina Morvai, as the first person on the list of EP candidates was in the centre

There is a tendency: the *proportion of female candidates is larger* than earlier, and larger than during the parliamentary election (although the majority of these women have an “Iron Lady” character, but this large proportion of women may suggests that the sphere of politics is not the space of the harsh struggle; the appearance of women can attenuate the hostility of the campaign; it can cover up the traditional leader cult, and so on). *But:* on the posters behind the women there are always males as *supporters*. (*Figures 9, 10, 11*)
Social image

All of the candidates are representatives of the well-off middle class. Both the physical appearance of the candidates and the social problems, respected by them, indicate their social position, and this position (and typical life situations connected with it) could be important from the voters’ point of view, who want to find the possibility of identification. These well-off middle class candidates give only few possibilities of identification; wide social groups cannot see, cannot recognize “their man” among the candidates. The confidential “capital” of politicians became less and less; by the data of a new sociological research, the politicians are at the bottom on the scale of confidence.

The main frontiers in the campaign

Hungarian political culture is much divided; the opposition seems to be antagonistic. (The length of the present paper does not allow for an in depth analysis of the historical causes of this phenomenon). There is opposition between government and opposition all over the world, but this opposition has become severely polarised in Hungary during the last decade. The opposition appears in the campaign as a necessity of choice between two – “black” and “white” – possibilities. There are several different grounds for the bipolar opposition: “right” versus “left”; EU-sceptics versus EU-believers; national problems versus global questions; conservatives versus liberals; opposition parties versus governmental parties; people idealising the Horthy era (the regime before the Second World War) versus people idealising the Kadar era; small parties versus big parties; extreme right versus democratic parties; parties outside the Parliament versus parliamentarian parties; countryside versus the capital (Budapest); civil society versus the political elite.

Different types of opposition appeared in the campaign materials of the parties. These materials were rather confrontational, the parties used the strategy of negative campaign.

*MSZP (Socialists):* (“left” versus “right”)

“I won’t vote for the Right … because they do not have a programme behind their rowdiness”. (Or: “… because they co-operate with the extremists”). “I will vote for the Left, because they represent my interest”. “I vote for the Left, because my value-system is unchangeable”

Visual oppositions: (“democrats” versus “extreme right”). a) a glass of beer versus a Molotov cocktail (the text is: “tolerance” or “passion”). (It is not quite understandable why beer is the
symbol of the tolerance…). b) Mother with her children *versus* a man in his extremist uniform (the text is: “love” versus “hatred”).

**FIDESZ**: (opposition *versus* government)
“Stop! It’s enough”. (Reference to the activity of the present government).
Visual effect (in the TV-spot of the party): the face of the former unpopular prime-minister, Ferenc Gyurcsány, transforms to the face of the present prime minister, Gordon Bajnai (= “they are the same”).

**SZDSZ (Liberals):** (small parties *versus* “big two”)
Who will be the “Third Force”? (The smaller parties were in a competition in the shadow of the two big parties, and SZDSZ wanted to win in this competition).
Visual oppositions: ("democrats" *versus* “extreme right”)
There was a series of posters; every poster based on an opposition; visually: an attractive and a repulsive person; and the text was: free and democratic or “árpádsávos” (the so called “Árpádsáv”, -- red and white stripes – were the family symbol of the first Hungarian monarchy, and in the 20th century the Hungarian fascist party used this symbol again). *(Figure 12).* But in a counter campaign on the Internet the inversion of the SZDSZ posters were published: the repulsive persons went over to the side of the SZDSZ and vice versa, and the text became: “free democrat” or “free Hungarian”. *(Figure 13)*

**MDF (Conservatives):** (small parties *versus* the “big two”)
“Listen to your mind” – it was an allusion; the FIDESZ former slogan was: “Listen to your heart”. They emphasised “honour” (*versus* corruption); and “honesty” (*versus* lies – as the “epitheton ornans” of governmental party, MSZP).

**Jobbik (Radical Right):** (Hungarians *versus* strangers)
“To leave Hungary for the Hungarians” (Its implicit meaning is: “and not for the strangers”). In their TV-spot they used a persiflage of a children’s rhyme with the fingers of the hand: “this one went to learn, this one cultivated his land, this one founded a small-enterprise, this one worked 10 hours a day, and this teeny-weeny stole everything -- now we will stop it”.)

**LMP (Greens):** (the “clear” youth *versus* the dark world of pollution and corruption)
They built up their campaign on the word “feel” (“I feel”, or “Do you feel?”).
There was a picture of a Gold Fish, and its text: “Do you feel, you can demand now…” In another picture we can see a baby with big eyes; and the text: “Do you feel, he/she would deserve better?” “Do you feel, you want the Good?” They used the tool of polar opposition, too. On a poster somebody gives soap (money for corruption) to another person; and the text: “Do you feel, you are paying me off, now?” On another poster we can see dark pictures of climate change versus joyful playing children.

*Munkáspárt (Communists):* (the “people” versus the “elite”)

“We didn’t steal, we didn’t swindle, we didn’t become corrupt – as all the other parties…”. “In the last 20 years the rich determined our fate, now we – the people -- want to decide”.

Almost all the parties accept bipolar thinking; a general trend is to look for “enemies”.

The “man in the street” follows the battle of the parties with the help of graffiti. Some typical examples of graffiti were: On MSZP (Socialists) posters: a doodling “thief” and the Star of David; on the FIDESZ poster “It’s enough!” there was a graffiti: “I (= FIDESZ) be think myself of Europe not too much”… On SZDSZ (Liberals) posters it said: Jew, henchmen of Jews, faggot, paedophile, druggies, traitor; on the poster: “Who will decide on our economy?” the graffiti was: “Simon Peresz”. On the posters of Jobbik it said: “Nazis”; on their poster of “The New Force” the graffiti said: “the old shit”; on another poster every person was given a toothbrush moustache like Hitler’s. Sometimes the leftists pasted a counter-poster onto their poster (*Figure 14*). Lastly, we could see a small sign of electricity works among the posters of Jobbik: “Pay attention! High voltage! Danger!” On the posters of MDF (Conservatives) Mrs. Ibolya David has got a toothbrush moustache, too; and all their candidates have got horns like those of the devil – as “traitors of the right wing”).

The simplification of political culture became a general tendency. The shortening of slogans expresses this process: in this campaign the slogans contained more and more simplified
messages, too. LMP (Greens): “I feel…” “Do you feel, that…?” FIDESZ: 1. “Stop it”! (or: “It’s enough!”) 2. “Vote!” 3. “New direction”. Jobbik (Radical Right): 1. “The New Force”, 2. “To leave Hungary for the Hungarians”. SZDSZ (Liberals): “Who will be the third force?” MDF (Conservatives): 1. “We know better” (as the party “Jobbik”, they also used the double meaning of the word “jobb”, (“Right” and “better”) . 2. “We want a new compromise/Ausgleich” (This is an allusion to the Hungarian-Austrian pact in 1867, which legalized the reign of the Habsburg monarchy in Hungary again). 3. “More brain (than brawn)”. (This poster has an unwanted message: the people on the poster point at their head, (they wanted to suggest the importance of the mind, but that gesture has another meaning: “You are stupid”). (Figure 15)

To the data of the election

The proportion of voters decreased. 2004: 38.5%; 2009: 36.3%

The aim of the majority of the parties (SZDSZ, MDF, Jobbik, LMP) was to cross the 5 per cent threshold. SZDSZ had a series of posters with the number: 200 001. (Its message was: It can rest with a single person -- in Hungary 200.001 votes were necessary to cross the threshold). Finally four parties won mandates: FIDESZ: 14 (56%), MSZP (Socialists): 4 (17%) Jobbik (Radical Right): 3 (14.7%), MDF (Conservatives): 1 (5.3%).

Conclusions

The campaign did not deal with the most important questions of Hungary nowadays. What is thematized less than its real social importance? For example the problems of unemployment, poverty, the crisis of demography, the position of agriculture and the villages; the suffocation of small and medium-sized enterprises; the energy affairs; the role of multinationals (they were mentioned in the campaign of radical right and left parties, but nobody analysed their real role); the real nature of the constraints (and pressures) in the international economic policy; the economic crisis; the crisis of state services (public transport, infrastructure, health care, education); the crisis of public security; the positions of education and medical service, (and different interests of them); property taxes; the structural changes in society, (the weakening of
the middle class, the increasing number of problems with the Roma question), and so on. And there is a marked absence of a vision of the future.

There are some tendencies, which may be general tendencies in Europe. (The decline of socialists; the credit crisis of the liberal market economy; the assault and the defence of the welfare state; the strengthening of the extreme right; the emergence of small, alternative parties against the two-pole party system; the domestic political questions got more emphasis as the common EU-questions; instability (of economy, of political democracy and of the whole countries); the political elite detaches itself from everyday life more and more; the absence of the visions of the future; decreasing confidence in politics, etc.) But some phenomena come from the special Hungarian situation, where a great sum of the most important questions are outside of the official discourses, and the biggest conflicts and tragedies of the Past (and the Present) are without public discussion and processing. (The free press and the Internet give publicity to every opinion, but real communication between different points of views is lacking). The relationship between Europe and Hungary is one of the questions, which are hushed up. While the “new” and small countries of Europe can feel like second class members, (and they have cause to feel this way) the project “Europe” won’t be a real important theme for them.

Notes

1. Moreover the EU has not a clear symbolic image: most of the people cannot realise, what is the cohesive force, the symbolic essence of the EU? Christianity (in opposition of Islam)? An alternative to the USA? A model of welfare capitalism? Greco-Roman culture as a common heritage? A common memory of the great periods of modern European history (renaissance, baroque, the Enlightenment)?

2. See Böhm, (2008)

3. The decals (altogether with other forms of street art) were the tools of small parties (mainly the greens and the extreme right wing parties). This is a part of the spontaneous active urban culture, and its actors and its target audience is the urban young population. In contrast with the big party-flags high above, these small and simple signals seem to be amateur and civil tools, and so they can suggest the “voice of people”. (Figure 16)

Budapest, 2009
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