Short Term Scientific Mission

within the COST Action A34 scientific program on

„Life Course Analysis”

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Host Institution: Laboratoire de Démographie et d’Étude Familiale, Université de Genève, Geneva, Switzerland.

Supervisor: Prof. Claudine SAUVAIN-DUGERDIL

Purpose of the visit:

Short Term Scientific Mission (STSM) was performed in order to deepen my knowledge in methodological and conceptual aspects of longitudinal data analysis. Especially I intended to learn how to use historical family reconstitutions as event history analysis and to apply in my Ph.D. dissertation.
Main items followed within the framework of STSM were:

- Theoretical and methodological aspects of life course analysis
- Characteristics of individual data; construction and management of longitudinal and individual level data (reconstruction of 19th century Geneva population, reconstruction of 18-19th centuries alpine populations)
- Theoretical and methodological aspects of demographic reproduction (the role of gender, family composition, social status in the process of family formation and childbearing)

Description of the work carried out during the Visit:

In order to deepen my knowledge in methodological and conceptual aspects of longitudinal analysis I attended a series of courses in statistics and doctoral school conferences:

- Michael Olszak: Analyse de variance et analyse de données
- Gilbert Ritschard: Données longitudinales et modèles de survie
- Participation to the two-days doctoral school organized by the Lemanic Center for the Study of Life Style and Life Course Studies (PAVIE, Université de Lausanne and Université de Genève) in 6-7 april („Les conflits: Evénements collectifs – trajectoires de vie“, lectures by Michel Oris, Christophe Bergouignan, Floriane Demont, Dario Spini, Guy Elcheroth, Jean-Marie LeGoff)

After the lectures and in the training seminars I had the possibility to discuss with professors and research assistants my questions related to data organization and construction of individual, family and community variables in analysis of first marriage in 19th century Transylvania. Furthermore I had personal meetings with Prof. Michel Oris, Prof. Alfred Perrenoud, PD Sandro Guzzi-Heeb, research assistant Reto Schumacher and Alexis Gabadinho who are specialists in longitudinal analysis and in demographic history. They gave me technical and theoretical advices related to my Ph.D. work. The Library of University of Geneva offered a rich documentation on the life course analysis and historical demography in general.

My visit to the Centre Regional d’Études des Populations Alpines (CREPA) at Sembrancher (Switzerland) was particularly useful to learn how to create,
organize and analyze rich genealogical materials of the 18-19th century alpine populations.

Main results obtained:

STSM was particularly useful in preparing further works on my Ph.D. dissertation. Several research directions was opened:

1) Family determinants of first marriage in 19th century rural Transylvania: data management, construction of family composition variables (birth order status, gender and parental presence)
2) Marital fertility in the 19th century rural Transylvania: data management, calculation of Total Marital Fertility Rate, survival curve of birth intervals
3) Following the advices of Michel Oris I intend to create a database which will contain all information about the couples and their children who were mentioned in the parish registers of baptism, marriages, burials and confirmations in two Transylvanian rural parishes in the period 1830-1910
4) Basic conceptualization of individual and collective events which I will use in my analysis: for example: marriage – family formation, childbearing – fertility: their different meanings for men and women in the context of pretransitional rural societies
5) Conceptualization of individual development during the life course – ex. transition to adulthood

Projected publications:

Transition to adulthood (first marriage and childbearing) in two Transylvanian rural societies in the second half of the 19th century (in Hungarian). Projected in the review of Hungarian Statistical Central Office – Demographic Research Institute: Demográfia

Other comments:

I would like to thank sincerely Prof. Claudine Sauvain-Dugerdlil for the support that I received from her and the organization of my STSM at the University of Geneva. She gave me the opportunity to work in the „Laboratoire de démographie et d’étude familiale” and introduced me to professors and
research assistants at the Laboratoire. Without her help I would have not been able to complete in this form the STSM.