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ISSUES OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON POLICE COMMUNICATION¹

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Fundamentally, researching police communications exists on the boundary of two young sciences that have won independent recognition nearly simultaneously. Géza Finszter, the President of the Police Science subcommittee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, has given voice to his concern in recent years that the police is uncovering the dysfunctions of its organization by employing authoritarian communications and citing secrecy considerations, thereby inhibiting the transformation of the police into a high status occupation, cooperation with the citizenry, and the creation of mutual trust.² In this article, I am going to review the history and opportunities, as well as the challenges of research in police communications; what dilemmas the communications researcher must face in the diversity of methodologies.

KEYWORDS:

law enforcement, communication, research methods, social media, qualitative research

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² FINSZTER Géza (2018): *Rendészettan*. Budapest, Dialóg Campus.

1. KNOWLEDGE, SCIENCE (SCIENTIFICNESS) AND METHODOLOGY

Anderson³ states that we can consider methodologies to be the set of such *conventional practices that are defined as having equity in science (scientificness)*. It is by them that we create knowledge; to be precise, how we create a thing that is defined as knowledge within the given theoretical framework. Thus, knowledge can be of various types, and the methodology that leads to it, the technique of creating the knowledge (depending on the perspective of the approach – the applicable epistemological framework) can be of various types as well, at times with an identical designation but divergent meaning. Thus, the diversity of methodologies is necessarily going to derive from the diversity of epistemological theories.⁴

The intellectual activity (knowledge creation and engaging in science) are defined by the epistemological period in which it is performed. This is context of a sort for its integration (and interpretation), what we call episteme, and which designates the dominant, distinguishing it from the submissive, showing the finding and its contradictions, saying something about the commonalities and the differences. It is the episteme that gives us the tool to examine the universe of knowledge and scientific research as a universe that consists of entities existing and constructed of changing relationships. The currently accessible world of intellectual endeavour is marked over the course of the past two hundred years and labels it as the modern episteme.⁵

Examining the hierarchical system of knowledge generation, Anderson arrived at the conclusion that *anything cannot be asked anywhere*, positioning in the system of knowledge generation gives rise to posing certain questions, while it prevents some others. In part, this is necessary for us to investigate the positioning and disciplinary foundations of police communications. First of all, however, a few words about inter, multi and trans-disciplinary research!

2. INTER, MULTI AND TRANS-DISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

(e.g. the new dimension of interdisciplinary relationships)

Let us begin with the fact that social sciences – versus natural sciences – are so called *soft sciences*, and in numerous cases – if not all – they do not withstand the test of positivist epistemology with regard to validity (external and internal), objectivity, measurability, reliability or even repeatability. The causation we are used to in hard sciences is often

³ Anderson, James A. (2005): *A kommunikációelmélet ismeretelméleti alapjai*. Budapest, Typotex. 46.

⁴ Ibid. 47.

⁵ Ibid. 22–23.

replaced by anecdotal evidence.⁶ We have arrived on an even more disputed territory, abandoning any and all effort at quantification, turning to creative techniques. This is when the role of the researcher changes (this can be handyman work, patching things, making montages, being a jazz musician, or even a choreographer⁷), the goal of the researcher (more in-depth understanding), the toolkit (the methodology, the taking of the sample, the processing, the evaluation, the interpretation, etc.), the entire research process (adaptable reflexive process), the system of perspectives for evaluating (quality!) the results (credibility).

A discussion is to follow regarding the disciplinary integration and methodological aspects of the qualitative research of police communications, utilising a possible approach.

Multidisciplinary research can be interpreted as a process seeking scientific learning, over the course of which we examine a problem from multiple points of view, but at the end, we do not integrate either the theoretical aspects or the resulting, various scientific results (treating them and presenting them as separate and apart). The *interdisciplinary* approach, however, assumes that we are creating the independent theory, conceptual and methodological identity and point of origin of the study. Consequently, the resulting findings must comprise a more coherent whole than in an interdisciplinary study; the scientific results are integrated.

The use of the concept of trans-disciplinary research is more disputed, as in the beginning, interdisciplinary studies had interpreted it as a meta-theoretical perspective; nowadays, however, pursuant to Gibbon (1994), trans-disciplinary approaches point beyond interdisciplinary practices. Its first appearance is from much earlier, however; we could first encounter it at the University of Nice in 1970, in the framework of the joint interdisciplinary seminar of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development and the French Ministry of Education. In 1972, Piaget states that trans-disciplinarity is a higher “stage” which means not just the interdisciplinary relationships and interactions of specialized research projects, but also encompasses these relationships into a system without any scientific boundaries.⁸

Now we say that it is based on the shared-mutual theoretical understanding of the various sciences, creating a shared platform and forum for problem-solving. This way, the knowledge (due to its essential nature) is transgressive and does not take into account institutional boundaries; in this regard, trans-disciplinarity fully adapts to the nature

⁶ TAMÁS András (2012): *A közigazgatás-tudomány helye és szerepe a tudományokon belül*. Available: http://archiv.uni-nke.hu/uploads/media_items/tamas-andras-a-kozigazgatás-tudomány-helye-es-szerepe-a-hadtudományon-belül.original.pdf (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

⁷ HORVÁTH Dóra – MITEV Ariel (2015): *Alternatív kvalitatív kutatási kézikönyv*. Budapest, Alinea.

⁸ BERNSTEIN, Jay Hillel (2015): Transdisciplinarity: A Review of Its Origins, Development, and Current Issues. *Journal of Research Practice*, Vol. 11, No. 1. Available: <http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/article/view/510/412> (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

Even these early ideas concerning integrated, transdisciplinary education, research and services had been expressed. Cf. JANTSCH, Erich (1972): Inter- and transdisciplinary university: A systems approach to education and innovation. *Higher Education*, Vol. 1, No. 1. 7–37.

of knowledge. It must be noted, however, that universities explicitly do not encourage trans-disciplinarity, as they are strongly hierarchical and operate in a rigid disciplinary structure.⁹

2.1. Communications and media science

In the scientific nomenclature of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, at the Department of Human and Social Sciences I (Languages and Literary Sciences) is where we find communications and media science (01 01 00).¹⁰

Table 1 • The positioning of communications and media science within the framework of language and literary sciences (Source: Compiled by the author.)

Language and literary science			
Literature and culture studies	Theatre and film studies	Communications and media science	History of education

In 2006, Péter Zsolt dedicated an entire volume to the disciplines of theories of communication, to expound the interdisciplinary origin of the science.¹¹ In the end, the author dedicates independent, individual chapters to the respective contributions of psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, sociology, social linguistics, cultural anthropology, political science and ethology and to communications science. The systematic review of the disciplinary background of communication (science) had been attempted before in the volume edited by István Béres and Özséb Horányi entitled *Társadalmi kommunikáció* [Social Communications] (2001). Even this early, the three primary avenues of inquiry could be clearly delineated, to wit, the transactional,¹² interactive¹³ and cultivation based¹⁴ approaches to communications, which sought to describe all that we consider communications in line with varied models.

“Two communications approaches (models) can be compared to each other on the basis of the consideration of (i) which one is capable of describing the case to be investigated, and (ii) if both are capable of it, which is the better model. Putting it another way: nowadays, we can think about communications from two varied perspectives: either in the shadow of some

⁹ NOWOTNY, Helga (s. a.): *The Potential of Transdisciplinarity*. Available: www.helga-nowotny.eu/downloads/helga_nowotny_b59.pdf (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

¹⁰ Tudományági némenklatúra, 2016. Available: http://mta.hu/data/dokumentumok/i_osztaly/I_osztaly_tudomanyagi_nomeklatura_2016.pdf (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

¹¹ ZSOLT Péter (2006): *Kommunikációelméletek diszciplínái*. Vác, EU-SYNERGON Kft. 5.

¹² Considers communication to be a flow or transfer of information.

¹³ Communication is an interaction over the course of which the parties are striving to achieve some kind of a common goal.

¹⁴ Communication considers it a process over the course of which the cultivation of a priori assumptions concerning values and correlations takes place.

kind of communications concept (model), as a thing within the interpretive purview of this concept, or on the phenomenology level, in which similarities appear with communications phenomena. In the first case, we can talk about communications, and in the latter, about the communications phenomenon. This, however, does not rule out the fact that we do not consider communications a communicative phenomenon at the same time, while it may not necessary be the same way the other way around...¹⁵

In the footsteps of Em Griffin (2001), Hungarian authors (Neményiné 2004,¹⁶ Fodor–Kriskó 2014¹⁷) presented the seven traditions of communications in educationally focused summary works: information theory and cybernetics, rhetoric, social psychology, semiotics, social cultural, social critical and phenomenological traditions. Every tradition provides varied perspectives of the approach, something we call the communicative phenomenological sphere. This phenomenological sphere is so diverse and complex that its description has made the introduction of numerous partial models, beyond the functional approach, not ignoring descriptive theories either. (This is where, at the same time, we find encyclopaedic and taxonomic efforts, including explicative attempts.) For the teaching of communications (and/or its research! – suppl. Kriskó), a single, valid monograph does not provide this comprehensive look – writes Béres and Horányi in 2001, and their claim remains true to this day.

Two decades ago, the authors have seen one of the reasons in the fact (expressed in depth in Chapter 4 of their book entitled *Disciplinary Review*), that the correlations of subhuman and human ethology, human sociobiology, evolution and behaviour, cannot be disregarded. Additionally, one must take into account the genetic and physiological definition of human behaviour, and its correlations with all that can be defined as culture has to be investigated. All this is lined up in their totality as a significant problem set.¹⁸

There are indeed approaches. Perhaps an integrative attempt to do so – or trying to overcome the contradictions – is a brand new perspective (bringing about the perspective of preparing for problem solving), which has become more and more recognized and acknowledged at the end of the nineties and the beginning of the millennium, hallmarked with the name of Özséb Horányi (2006),¹⁹ named the participation theory (PTC). On the one hand, it is the PTC's goal to find (mark?) the natural position of communication “among human things”, and on the other hand, to offer a starting point for communication research by making “all types of phenomena in communications subject to description in a uniform framework”.²⁰ PTC takes its test with regard to its relationship to the traditional background disciplines of communications and the ties to communications concepts

¹⁵ BÉRES István – HORÁNYI Özséb (2001): *Társadalmi kommunikáció*. Budapest, Osiris. vi.

¹⁶ NEMÉNYINÉ dr. GYIMESI Ilona (2004): *Kommunikációelmélet. Személynygyűjtemény*. Budapest, Perfekt.

¹⁷ FODOR László – KRISKÓ Edina (2014): *A hatékony kommunikáció alapjai*. Budapest, Noran Libro.

¹⁸ BÉRES István – HORÁNYI Özséb (2001): *Társadalmi kommunikáció*. Budapest, Osiris. 87.

¹⁹ HORÁNYI Özséb ed. (2006): *A kommunikáció mint participáció*. Budapest, Typotex.

²⁰ HORÁNYI (2006): *op. cit.* 14.

present in daily use of language.²¹ These analytical works that have been initiated along these lines subsequently use PTC as a tool (language) and as a method, so people can reflect on communicative states in the most diverse fields, from political communications through sacred communications, all the way to arithmetic or ethnography.²²

2.2. Police studies

The Hungarian academic thinking agrees that the roots of police operations can be found in antiquity as well, with the word police (Polizei/wissenschaft, policing), deriving from the Greek word politeia (state) and the Latin word politia. Points of views, however, have differed (particularly in Hungarian and international academic literature) throughout the recording, classification, publication (education and publication, nurturing professional traditions within an organizational framework).²³ With the term *guter Ordnung des Gemeinwesens* (“police and good order”, or “good police and order” – “good community order”) we encountered in German language areas about five hundred years ago,²⁴ and the disciplinary anchoring of the activity takes place within the purview of the so-called cameral sciences (Kameralwissenschaft or Kameralistik or Kameralia), meaning a part of governance and administration of justice. Cameralism is necessary for the training of officials; it was primarily a state academic discipline and simultaneously university subject encompassing economic knowledge in the Germany of the 16th–18th centuries.²⁵ In 1727, in Halle, and then two and a half decades later, we encounter the cameral studies as a subject in the Theresianum. Policing arises in the 18th century again at the legal faculty of the University of Kolozsvár and a subject of state policing (1774) and two decades later, in 1776, during the reign of Franz I, mining and police law is introduced as a new subject.²⁶ It is somewhat surprising that according to the latest research, the earliest police science work – or rather, *science de police* work – is derived from the pen of the French Nicolas

²¹ The background disciplines published in Appendix no. 1 of the 2006 Horányi book are identical with the scientific disciplines listed in the 2001 Béres–Horányi volume.

²² See DEMETER Márton ed. (2014): *Konstruált világok. A jelenségek kommunikatív leírása*. Budapest, Typotex; BAJNOK Andrea – KORPICS Márta – MILOVÁN Andrea – PÓLYA Tamás – SZABÓ Levente eds. (2012): *A kommunikatív állapot. Diszciplináris rekonstrukciók*. Budapest, Typotex.

²³ SALLAI János (2015): A magyar rendészettudomány etablációja. *Belügyi Szemle*, Vol. 63, No. 6. 5–28.

²⁴ JASCHKE, Hans-Gerd – BJORGO, Tore – ROMERO, Francisco del Barrio – KWANTEN, Cees – MAWBY, Robin – PAGON, Milan (2007): *Perspectives of Police Science in Europe*. Final Report, CEPOL Series.

²⁵ MADARÁSZ Aladár (2002): Kameralizmus, történelmi iskola, osztrák gazdaságtan. *Közgazdasági Szemle*, Vol. 49, No. 10. 838–857. Available: <http://epa.oszk.hu/00000/00017/00086/pdf/madarasz.pdf> (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

²⁶ BÍRÓ Vencel (1945): *A Kolozsvári Jezsuita Egyetem szervezete és építkezései a XVIII. században*. Kolozsvár, Erdélyi Múzeum Egyesület, 1–2. füzet. 8. Available: http://eda.eme.ro/bitstream/handle/10598/8710/EME ETF_192_Biro-A%20kolozsv%C3%A1ri%20jezsuita%20egyetem.pdf?sequence=6 (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

Delamare (1639–1723) between 1705 and 1710, in the form of a two-volume text book, entitled *Traité de la Police*.²⁷

Within the interpretation of Johann Heinrich Gottlob von Justi, Polizeiwissenschaft is a part of public administration studies (Staatswissenschaft), and is subject to the assets of the entire state, including the assets and abilities of its subjects, maintaining and growing in the interest of mutual welfare or happiness. Policing is a monitoring practice capable of expanding the power of the state and appears as the guardian of already achieved public happiness.²⁸

Joseph von Sonnenfels (1733–1817), the defining theoretician of the last third of the 18th century, with regard to state objectives, has taken a contrary position to Justi, and said that police science encompasses the foundation and maintenance of the internal security of the state.²⁹ He was of the opinion that the state had to provide things for individuals that they themselves were unable to create: safety, the fulfilment of fundamental needs, rest and comfort, of which police was responsible for.³⁰

If we were to have stepped on French soil at the same time, then the police – following in the footsteps of Louis Turquet de Mayerne³¹ – gains its rightful place as part of governance, as one of the most important agencies alongside the king: Department of Justice, army, treasury, police agency.³² Reaching back to British theoreticians, it is worth highlighting Patrick Colquhoun's definition from the 1800s, to wit: In Great Britain, policing is a new science that encompasses not just administration of justice operations that are exclusively in the purview of magistrates, but crime prevention, investigation and all such functions that are associated with the internal regulation of the order and welfare of civil society.³³

A shared element in the given areas is that police science is processed as a governmental science, although sometimes classified under political science (as well) or under military

²⁷ Koi Gyula (2014): A közigazgatás-tudomány kezdetei és Polizeiwissenschaft szerepe Magyarországon. *Állam- és Jogtudomány*, Vol. 55, No. 2. 27–49. Available: <http://real.mtak.hu/18122/1/2014-2-koi.pdf> (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

²⁸ SZIGETI Péter (2005): A hatalom filozófusa az államról. In FEKETE Judit – SZIGETI Péter: *Az állam szerepe a jólétben és a mindennapi hatalomgyakorlásban*. Műhelytanulmányok, 2005/3., MTA Politikai Tudományok Intézete (Digitális archívum).

²⁹ SONNENFELS, Joseph von (1777): *Grundsätze der Polizei, Handlung und Finanzwissenschaft*. Wien, J. Kurzböck. 41. Available: <http://ia600301.us.archive.org/22/items/grundstzederpo01sonn/grundstzederpo01sonn.pdf> (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

³⁰ SONNENFELS (1777): *op. cit.* 26–30.

³¹ See in the original. MAYERNE, Louis Turquet (1611): *La monarchie aristodémocratique, ou Le gouvernement composé et meslé des trois formes de légitimes républiques. Aux Estats Généraux des Provinces Confédérées des Pays-bas*. Paris, Jean Berjon et Jean le Bouc. Available: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k58057w/f5.image> (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

³² FOUCAULT, Michel (1988) [1982]: The political technology of individuals. In MARTIN, Luther H. – GUTMAN, Huck – HUTTON, Patrick H. eds.: *Technologies of the self*. Amherst, The University of Massachusetts Press. 145–162; JASCHKE, Hans-Gerd – BJORGO, Tore – ROMERO, Francisco del Barrio – KWANTEN, Cees – MAWBY, Robin – PAGON, Milan (2007): *Perspectives of Police Science in Europe*. Final Report, CEPOL Series.

³³ COLQUHOUN, Patrick (1800): *A treatise on the commerce and police of the River Thames*. 7th edition. London, J. Mawman, Preface. 1.

science. In our country, in the framework of Department IX of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (economics and legal studies), taxonomically, policing (09 01 07) is situated between state and legal studies (09 01 00). The overview is somewhat complicated by the fact that it is grouped together with 20 other sciences:³⁴

Table 2 • The positioning of police science within the system of state and legal studies
(Source: Compiled by the author.)

State and legal studies	
State and legal studies	
Constitutional and legal history	
Development of Roman law and European civil law	
Constitutional law	
Public administration, public administration law	
Public Administrative Procedure	
Police studies	
Financial law	
Civil law	
Civil procedure	
Family law	
Competition law	
Criminal law	
Criminal procedure	
Sentencing law	
Criminology	
Criminal investigation	
Labour law and social law	
Agricultural law	
Environmental law	
Consumer protection	
International public law	
Private international law	
European law	
Comparative law	
Church law	
Sociology of law	

In Hungarian education, policing also received its independent university chair late, in 2012, as the chair of police theory of the National University of Public Service (Nemzeti Közszolgálati Egyetem). As far as academic public life and the maintenance of traditions are concerned, the Hungarian Association of Police Science was founded in 2004 with the objective of encompassing the study of police science associated academic questions and related social activities.³⁵

³⁴ Tudományági nomenklatúra, MTA. Available: <http://mta.hu/doktori-tanacs/tudomanyagi-nomenklatura-106809> (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

³⁵ A Magyar Rendészettudományi Társaság Alapszabálya, 2. §. Available: www.rendeszet.hu/alapszabaly (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

Here, we are limiting the presentation to the listing of academic departments:

- Institute of Criminal Sciences
- Institute of Public Law Enforcement and Applied Management Theory
- Institute of Law Enforcement Training and Education
- Institute of Behavioural Sciences and Law Enforcement
- Institute of Criminalistics
- Independent Departments of the Faculty
- Foreign and Technical Languages Centre

Figure 1 • Educational departments of the Faculty of Law Enforcement
(Source: <https://en.uni-nke.hu/>)³⁶

It has not been listed but we must mention the Doctoral School of Police Sciences and Law Enforcement, which is responsible for the young researchers' s preparing, training and awarding PhD degrees in the field of Police Science and Law Enforcement. Géza Finszter wrote comprehensive monographs on (both in a domestic and international perspective) police sciences and law enforcement.³⁷ Katalin Molnár, Assistant Professor at NUPS regularly publishes articles on the topic of education of police communication in Hungary.

It is interesting that after the processing of an ever greater number of academic works in the history of public administration and policing, in 2014, Koi is talking about a science of law enforcement with a police background. He highlights the fact we have discussed previously, to wit, that public administration in the modern sense had actually grown out of police administration (internal affairs administration). While in the beginning, the concept included every speciality, later on, after the separation of military affairs and finance, police administration began to diminish, but under the label “internal affairs” or another label, a significant portion of governmental affairs belong under this rubric.³⁸

What then is the situation with the science of public administration?

The above nomenclature already indicates that we are thinking of the science of public administration and the administrative law in a tightly interwoven manner. In 2012, András Tamás stated at the scientific conference entitled *The role of science in the development of the Hungarian public service*: “*The science of public administration – according to the uniform views of the academic literature – can at most be derived from the 18th century.*”

³⁶ Accessed: 11 March 2019.

³⁷ FINSZTER Géza (2003): *A rendészet elmélete*. Budapest, KJK-Kerszöv.; FINSZTER Géza (2018): *Rendészettan*. Budapest, Dialóg Campus.

³⁸ Koi (2014): *op. cit.*

*One can assume its existence – with some simplification – from works with such titles, but also from the thematics of higher education.*³⁹

In confirmation of the foregoing, he shows us how the first form of the science of public administration in Hungary and in Europe is the law of public administration. An independent university subject and faculty had existed for it in Hungary in the second half of the 19th century. This era of scientific specialization roughly matches the time for the development of the constitutional state, the rule of law and due process and their explanation for scientific purposes. Tamás clearly explores this reasoning: *“The qualification, identification and classification of administrative tasks and problems can be performed on the basis of legal procedure, thus, according to the notions of “due process”, the law is a general measurement of public administration.*⁴⁰ In the 19th century, the social scientists of numerous European countries claimed that every social condition that is regulated by law is a subject of legal studies. Thus, the science of public administration is a subject of law, a science, specifically, or scientific discipline.

– Of the conceptual or theoretical milestones of public administration science, here we are only citing the Magyary School and the body of work of Zoltán Magyary to the extent of a few ideas, demonstrating that we are dealing with a more recent multi, inter, or as other authors state, pluridisciplinary subject.⁴¹ The creation of a unified science of public administration was at the focal point of Magyary’s work, yet his lifetime work and school still nurtured interdisciplinary public administration research. He saw in the space ruled by the legal subject of public administration, the science of public administration, and public administrative policy, that the process of the area turning into a unified science were going to be founded upon modern management science, organizational science, and the science of administration. At the same time, management science and public administrative geography that were adapted to public administration had been unveiled upon the legacy of the Magyary School. Magyary was the one who had involved finance, sociography and history into the scientific exploration of public administration phenomena.⁴²

As far as policing is concerned, Magyary found that this is a branch of public administration with a broad jurisdictional scope extending into every branch of public administration (which is why it has to be treated as part of the general administration), yet its clearly delineated goal precisely designates its content: ensuring general calm, security and order. Zoltán Magyary classified the duties of the police into the following categories:

³⁹ TAMÁS András (2012): *A közigazgatás-tudomány helye és szerepe a tudományokon belül*. Available: http://archiv.uni-nke.hu/uploads/media_items/tamas-andras-a-kozigazgas-tudomany-helye-es-szerepe-a-hadtudomanyom-belul.original.pdf (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

⁴⁰ TAMÁS (2012): *op. cit.* 30.

⁴¹ ALMÁSY Gyula (2012): *A közigazgatási szervezés és technológia fejlődése Magyarországon*. Doctoral thesis. PTE AJK. Available: <http://ajk.pte.hu/files/file/doktori-iskola/almasy-gyula/almasy-gyula-muhelyvita-ertekezes.pdf> (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

⁴² ALMÁSY (2012): *op. cit.*

maintaining and restoring public order; maintaining public safety; political or state police; public administrative police; justice administration police; and police fining.⁴³

Once again, we find ourselves among a multitude of disciplines. The scientific explanation of the science of public administration is sectioned, meaning that public administration disciplines exist as technical umbrella concepts. For approximately 80 years in Hungary, public administration law and the subject of public administration have been consciously distinguished, both designated as scientific disciplines. At the same time, the appearance of economic and sociological points of view (primarily due to American influence), brought about the policy and political science based interpretation of public administration phenomena in the scientific realm.

András Tamás's conclusion is an excellent summary of our discussion:

“...the legal aspect demonstrates relatively little of the details of public administration, as far as the subject in an economic sense is concerned. Thus, on the one hand, the science of public administration is unimaginable without the science of public administrative law, and on the other hand, the science of public administrative law is unimaginable without the utilization of the results of a multitude of other sciences.”⁴⁴

2.3. State studies or state science

The professional and training efforts of recent years (with particular focus on the government courses⁴⁵ of the National University of Public Service and continuing education courses and applicable research⁴⁶ in government,⁴⁷) are attempting to involve the subject of government, as well. In this latter regard, the Director of the Institute of Governmental Research and Development concludes that it must be interpreted as a transdisciplinary area, thus giving rise to primary and hybrid subjects, contents and results, in a targeted manner and on the basis of practical considerations. (This is how the scientific examination of the state is put in its place in scientific taxonomy.) The need to work out a specific knowledge content that is embodied in (independent) governmental scientific disciplines is expressed in an ever more robust fashion.⁴⁸

⁴³ MAGYARY Zoltán (1942): *Magyar közigazgatás*. Budapest, Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda. 561. Available: http://mtdportal.extra.hu/books/magyary_zoltan_magyar_kozigazgatas.pdf (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

⁴⁴ TAMÁS (2012): *op. cit.* 34.

⁴⁵ For more please see Ministry of the Prime Minister's Office Decree 7/2016. (II. 15.) on the definition of the bachelor and graduate level faculties of government studies and their graduation requirements, and Government Decree 282/2016. (IX. 21.) on the amendment of associated government decrees.

⁴⁶ See the mission of the Institute of Science of Governance and Development (<http://akfi.uni-nke.hu/>).

⁴⁷ See more Act LII of 2016 on state officers.

⁴⁸ KAISER Tamás (2016): Az államkutatások helye a társadalomtudományok rendszerében. *Államtudományi Műhelytanulmányok*, No. 1. 2–18.

Table 3 • The positioning of government sciences within the systems of social sciences
 (Source: KAISER 2016, 8.)

Social Sciences						
Legal studies	Political science	Sociology	Public administration	Science of public administration	Policing	Military Science

In this subchapter we must address government studies, specifically its approach concerning the examination of the state’s functions, in which we find the police among the security duties of the state, due to it being the inheritor of the mandates of internal order (security).⁴⁹

András Karácsony explains that “*The need to train government officials gave rise to the birth of political-cameral sciences.*”⁵⁰ Perhaps it is this sentence that best pinpoints the tripartite superposition we must take into account when we research police communications and place the methodological considerations of the field (outside of communications and media studies) under the microscope. Government, governmental operations, officials, as new labour, provided by university instructors performing academic research by relaying on the most up-to-date research results of themselves and their colleagues and cameral sciences that are originated by government studies and as policing as a part of such studies.

Karácsony is examining the relationship between law, government and political science in an educational history context, concluding that even though his correlation is not concerned with the history or theory of science, he must nonetheless touch upon the history of science and current social-political factors. He believes the reason for this is that the instructors of the universities are theoretically the communicators of the latest scientific findings, and the universities see to the replenishment of social (occupational) groups. He projects this onto the education of attorneys, but we – I – can do the same with regard to training for management organization training, as we are producing the new labour pool into the machinery of the government’s operations when we release future officials. This is not even referencing the fields of policing and national defence, which is most directly involved in the issues of fulfilling the security functions of the state. I would not like to

⁴⁹ PAPP Ignác (1991): Az általános államtanról. *Acta Universitatis Szegediensis: Acta Juridica et Politica*, 40. Tom, 1–26. Fasc./1991. 263–277. Available: http://acta.bibl.u-szeged.hu/6695/1/juridpol_040_263-277.pdf (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

⁵⁰ KARÁCSONY András (2012): Az állam- és a politikatudomány helyzete a jogi kari oktatásban. *Vajdasági Magyar Tudományos Társaság, Magyar Tudomány Napja a Délvidéken – 2012*. Conference presentation. Available: www.vmtt.org.rs/mtn2012/015_022_Karacsony_A.pdf (Downloaded: 1 May 2018.)

write about the training, but about the lines of force along which research questions are being formed, what the context of research plans are, and how one can conduct research if they happen to be engaged in it regarding police communications in Hungary.

The list of the educational units of the Faculty of Science of Public Governance and Administration shall serve an illustrative purpose here:

- Centre for Executive Training and Continuing Education
- Institute of State Theory and Governance
- Institute of Civilistics
- Institute of European Constitutional and Legal History
- Institute of Hungarian Constitutional and Legal History
- Lajos Lőrincz Institute of Administrative Law
- Institute of Human Resources
- Institute of Constitutional Law
- Institute of E-Government
- Institute of Public Management and Administration
- Institute of State Governance and Public Policy
- Thomas Molnar Research Centre
- Local Governments' Research Centre
- Research Centre of Public Finance
- Institute of Public Finances and Financial Law

Figure 2 • Department of Faculty of Science of Public Governance and Administration
(Source: <https://en.uni-nke.hu/>)⁵¹

3. INSTITUTIONAL (OR ORGANIZATIONAL) LEVEL COMMUNICATIONS AND ACCESS

Denis McQuail states that communications research must necessarily be interdisciplinary in nature and the application of varied tools is needed in its approaches and methodology alike.⁵² In his approach, the police communication represents the institutional level

⁵¹ Accessed: 11 March 2019.

⁵² McQUAIL, Denis (2003): Making progress in a trackless, weightless and intangible space: A response to Keith Roe. *Communications*, Vol. 28, No. 3. 275–284.

– as a network serving specific objectives – which presumably have defined patterns and forms, and in this context certain forced forms exist. (For example, the strongly legalese-oriented language, the official style, the impersonal nature and the formal forms of address pertaining to position or rank, “genre” based strong associations that we find in commands, instructions or briefings, etc., can be considered such.) A characteristic of this level is that it is not accessible to all, not everyone can connect with the operation of the network – and into the research of the network, if we are specifically talking about policing – as the inheritor of the duties of public safety and internal order.

He assigns the methods of approaches of media theories (without going into details here) into the media materialist, social materialist, media culturalist and social culturalist groups. In the first case, theoreticians and empirical researchers⁵³ are interested in media content and effect, in the second, media ownership and control, in the third, the media experience of the recipient, and in the fourth case, the deeper effect of media experience on the individual and society. Thus, all the philosophical roots and methodologies are rather varied:

- *When employing structural approaches*, we often witness questions posed that are adapted to the needs of management and policy; this is where we find audience surveys, research studies in use, effect or experience, and acceptance analysis.
- *The behavioural approach* – depending on whether or not psychological or sociological considerations dominate – places experimental research or multi-variable, conducted in a natural environment, of course, analyses, with the latter, treating the individual and groups of individuals⁵⁴ on a statistical level.
- *The cultural approach* – by virtue of its ties to the humanities, anthropology and linguistics – favours questions⁵⁵ of meaning and language, cultural research with a media focus, the creative investigation of the qualitative examination of labelling practices, or text analysis.⁵⁶

Communications research does not equal media research or press research. Police communications may be investigated on the level of the individual, group, organization, society, and from an intercultural aspect – matching how McQuail distinguishes given empirical areas. Due to the difficulties of (the researcher) infiltrating the organization, the primary path can be generally limited to the organizational and public levels. (Let us view this as a socio-political limit, with few exceptions). Research in Hungary also supports that for the most part, research efforts uncovering the mass communications of the police – professional press, propaganda work, later “blue” or public measure

⁵³ MCQUAIL, Denis (2015): *A tömegkommunikáció elmélete*. Budapest, Wolters Kluwer. 14–15.

⁵⁴ Regarding the possible forms of interpretation of the individual, in communications and the media sciences (attribution model, conjunctive model, well situated individual and active individual, and to all this the three possible perspectives are biological, materialist and semiotic), see in detail ANDERSON (2005): *op. cit.* 97–121.

⁵⁵ MCQUAIL (2015): *op. cit.* 23–24.

⁵⁶ Today, text analysis covers broadly defined texts, even multimedia content.

practices⁵⁷ – are taking place. Researchers in the organization are constrained by their dependent ties, the limits arising from their legal status, moral and financial constraints, and their own (independent researcher) perspective is skewed by their own involvement. Researchers coming from outside the organization must come to grips with access difficulties, complicated licensing procedures, internal control mechanisms that are invisible to them. Thereafter, in possession of the permit, there is a shortage of trust which inhibits the acquisition of honest and in-depth information, the achievement of set researcher goals, the gleaning of credible and valid results. The advantages of the objectivity of an outsider status erode in a layperson “civilian” role that is lacking an – at times – sufficient interpretive framework and personal experience.

4. THE AGE AND RESEARCH OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The appearance of social media – content jointly created and shared by users and then continuously commented upon, and the virtual communities forming around this content – brought about fundamental changes in the thought process about communication and mass media, on the individual and organizational levels alike. The scientifically motivated, although rather sporadic examination of social media has begun, but do the new tools – and to what extent – change the communicative behaviour of agents (individually and collectively); what new patterns, rituals, opportunities and challenges are engendered? The theoretical frameworks among which the investigations (can) proceed offer approaches over a wide spectrum, from individual behavioural theories all the way to theories of mass communications. Additionally, the nature of agency has also changed, with digitalization and virtual reality bringing about the rise of new types of agents. In the following, we are going to present a brief overview of the subject of what research traditions the professional researching social media may rely upon at launch, and what innovative research methods they can follow or learn from, particularly when they are conducting their research in a boundary field, or a young inter or multidisciplinary area.

4.1. Social media in a qualitative research: challenges and recommendations

The arrival of social media fundamentally changed how people, groups or communities communicate or interact with one another. The marketing communication models of organizations have changed, since the new media (implemented through hyper targeting), has brought about the new business practice of personalized offers; additionally, it has become an important area for reputation building and the acquisition of mediated

⁵⁷ To do this, first and foremost an “inside” circle of researchers, primarily police instructors and trainers and/or those in an official position have an opportunity. First and foremost, it is not research but rather educational materials that are generated in the area of police communications.

business revenues. At the same time, social media also demands its place in internal and interpersonal – and external partners – communications. In other words, the police may also not ignore it.

The reason why all this is making the research of Hungarian police communications is that the epistemology and research methodology of the previous “traditional” media era is also not fully explored. I myself have performed a communication-based review of the *Belügyi Szemle* [Interior Ministry Journal] (meaning that it concentrates on propaganda, social ties, and media).⁵⁸ This analysis seeks the answer to the question of what motivates the police authority when shaping the ties with citizens and along what principles the media communication and media tool use of the organization is being shaped. First, the propaganda messages and its applied tools (can be/are) introduced. The key identified topics (equivalent to today’s competency fields) have become labour relations, sector and professional ties, “ties with working people”, the handling of public affairs, media relations and mass communications, as well as crisis communications. (For the spell of a short study, a model of communication theory – interpersonal communication has also been published.)⁵⁹

Ngai et al.⁶⁰ undertook comprehensive research in 2015 by analysing the articles of five leading academic databases⁶¹ (a total of 46 articles on the subject).⁶² They performed the search and analysis along keywords such as social media, virtual communities, online communities, web2.0, blogs, social sites and social computing. The research encompassed the 2002–2011 time period, which was the most significant growth period of the social media market. An overview of this research shall follow.

Following *the narrative analysis*, a *chain of cause–causation* is getting developed, with researchers comparing it with conceptual models used by prior researchers. Finally, the numerous models and theoretical frameworks were classified into three groups: the sets of personal behavioural theories, social behavioural theories, and the set of mass media theories.

⁵⁸ KRISKÓ Edina (2010): Rendőrségi kommunikáció 1953–1989. *Rendvédelmi Füzetek*, No. 1. 123–132.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ NGAI, Eric W. T. – TAO, Spencer S. C. – MOON, Karen K. L. (2015): Social media research: Theories, constructs, and conceptual frameworks. *International Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 35, No. 1. 33–44.

⁶¹ ABI/Inform, Business Source Premier, Emerald Management, eJournals, Science Direct, and ISI Web of Knowledge.

⁶² The 46 articles were selected after the narrative analysis of the hits – it is consequently a sample being filtered.

Table 4 • Theories and models used in social media research (Source: NGAI et al. 2015, 35.)

Personal behavioural theories	
Attribution theory	1
Elaboration likelihood model (ELM)	1
ERG ⁶³ – theory (Clayton Alderfer’s theory on the triad of existence, relatedness, and growth)	1
Expectation and disconfirmation paradigm	2
Goal-directed behaviour model	1
Hofstede’s theory of cultural difference	1
Personality traits	4
Psychological choice model	1
Risk perception theory	1
Social cognitive theory	2
Switching behaviour	1
Task-technology fit model	1
Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	6
Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)	2
Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)	1
Theories of Social Behaviour	
Cognitive map	1
Effectuation process/theory	1
Involvement theory	1
Justice theory	1
Social capital theories	5
Social exchange theories	2
Social identity theory	5
Social influence theory	5
Social interaction theory	1
Team loafing theory	2
Social network analysis	2
Social power	1
Social ties	1
Mass communications theories	
Media richness theory	2
Para-social interactions ⁶⁴	1
Uses and gratification theory	3

⁶³ ERG: E = Existence, R = Relatedness, G = Growth

⁶⁴ Ties we nurture across significant social gaps, thereby maintaining the appearance of a community.

Antecedents in the chain of causation represent some kind of stimulus that precedes the behavioural outcome, thus they are actually inputs. Mediators are variables that explain the causative correlation, the relationship between inputs and outputs. Moderators are research variables that can be measured either quantitatively or characterised qualitatively (e.g. in social media research, the demographic or other characteristics of the users). The results are expected outcomes generated by the antecedents and are fundamentally dependent on the variables; in case of social media research, they are dependent on the two main variables, to wit, personal and organizational context. All of the foregoing is summarised in detail in the table below. The numerical data shows the number of relevant studies contained in the examined sample.

Table 5 • Attributes adoption in social media research (Source: NGAI et al. 2015, 39.)

Antecedents	
1. Social factors	
Social influence	4
Social capital	7
Other (taking on social roles, social power)	2
2. User attributes	
User perceptions	14
User experiences	3
User personality	4
3. Organizational attributes	
Client orientation	2
Marketing orientation	2
Intermediaries	
1. Platform attributes	
Tool selection	2
Tool integration	2
2. Social factors	
Social influence	2
Social capital	2
Other (team inefficiency)	2
3. User attributes	
User perceptions	3
User behaviour	12
Moderators	
1. User character	
Demographic variables	3
User personality	1
Cultural dimensions	1

Antecedents	
2. Social factors	
Social influence	2
Social capital	2
Results	
1. Personal context	
User intention	21
User behaviour	6
2. Organizational context	
Brand value	4
Client ties	2

They found that the bulk of research studies was seeking causation among user intent, behaviour and perception, and desires (expectations), (strongly concentrating on personal subjective and individual points of view), but it appears that a gap is showing in expanding the organizational perspective insofar as social media use is concerned. Numerous research studies are examining social factors and the questions of power, but these studies rarely rely on existing theoretical frameworks. Few studies are concerned with cultural background and dimensions, tool compatibility and integration, and in all cases organizational concerns are underrepresented, even though in many studies, brand value and client relations are key issues.

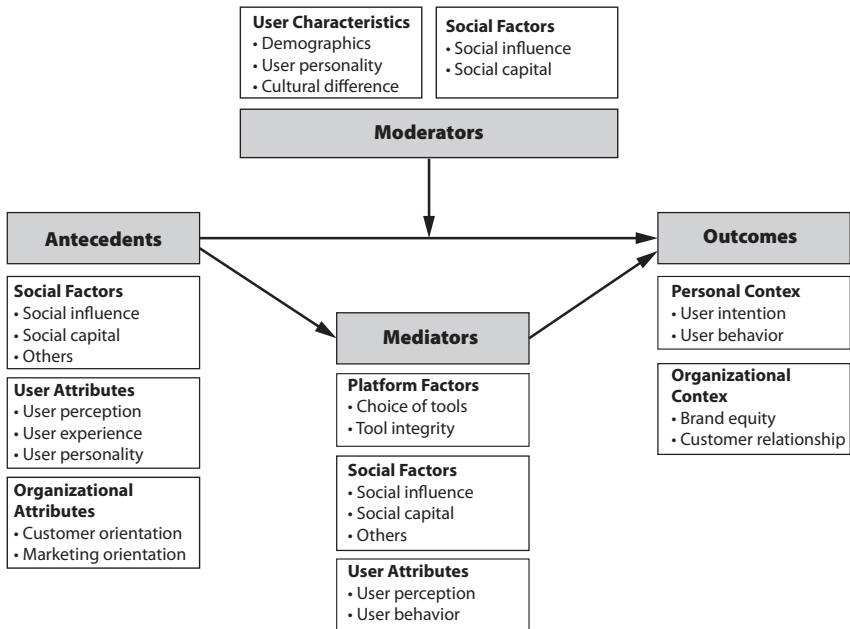


Figure 3 • Causal-chain framework for social media research (Source: NGAI et al. 2015, 40.)

5. SUMMARY

On the one hand, we must take into account that even though knowledge is transgressive, and we prefer to use the adjective transdisciplinary for our research studies (of late!), while at the same time it is not at all certain that there is any kind of a common-mutual understanding in the expression and approaches of the research problem with regard to the allusions and points of connection of scientific disciplines. Scientific taxonomy and university structures are rather obstacles than incentives to this new knowledge producing method, since their structures reinforce the fact that anything cannot be asked anywhere or anytime. This means a strong barrier as early as the time of expressing the research problem or question. The courageous person posing the question can easily find him/herself on an academic no-man's land. Those who wish to traverse outside the traditions of associated academic disciplines, find themselves in a nearly endless scientific historical and theoretical research and can easily miss their own set path and lose focus. The communication researcher can choose among structuralist, behaviourist or cultural approaches, but their selection among the multitude of methodologies is arbitrary there as well and is tied to the episteme of traditional media era, for now.

We have scarce knowledge available on social media research, but even those show signs on the basis of which it can be assumed that it is exactly the organizational level communication that lacks research methodological frameworks and handles. Institutional tethers remain, for the most part, unexplored (versus individual variables, for instance), and it had been established that opportunities latent in existing theoretical frameworks have not yet been harnessed by researchers to date. To these days, monitoring and verification have fallen outside the scope of more in-depth analyses, just as the cultural questions of the application of social media. As it happens, these are also the key questions of police communications nowadays.

Recommended paths: organizational orientation, in particular, the use of social media as a strategic tool (above and beyond customer service relations). In particular, what factors are preventing the use of daily social media use in operative functions and on a systemic level; does social media genuinely contribute to the better operation of organizations, from a technology perspective, how close is social media to the organization's resource planning or other IT systems, what level of upper management support or rejection surrounds it, etc. To date, the social strength of social media has not been investigated in depth, either. This appears extremely current in light of the rewarding, coercive, legitimate political power, as well as the sixth column of informational power identified alongside it.⁶⁵

It is as if the independent identity of police communications research would be forming in an unfocused manner; contributing to this development is the very diverse terrain of communications theory, the multitude of concerns associated with the methodology

⁶⁵ There is research data with regard to the fact that e.g. with the exception of the reference political power, it has a direct effect on all of the other four, e.g. the electronic supply chain management system.

of soft sciences, the dilemmas of the interpretation of researcher roles and on the part of the experts of other academic disciplines, distrust, challenges given rise by the new media. All these confirm the need for us to develop some kind of a theoretical framework for the research of police communications (as organizational communications), for social media communications from an organizational perspective, and to take a look at the applicability and adaptability of former theories and models of communication. At the same time, it must be acknowledged that in Hungary, we are still in the process of taking the initial steps.

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