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A Contribution to the Reflection on the Notion of Agricultural Multifunctionality

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Abstract: This paper “exceeds” to a certain degree the boundaries of rural sociology focusing on deeper reflection upon the issue of the conceptual determination of multifunctionality from a broader theoretical methodological (and philosophical) viewpoint, with the aim of making an original contribution to a more thorough understanding and comprehension of the notion. The notion of multifunctionality is a basic notion of the European concept of agriculture and a great challenge to rural sociology. There are still controversies and disagreements over its definition as a necessary precondition for practical operationalisation and decision-making. This paper is focused on the investigation of the notion of multifunctionality, but still more on the reflection upon and detection of “deeper” meanings and heuristic potentials of the notion of multifunctionality. Therefore we have opted for defining and not for definition. We have made a short review of axiological-methodological issues of the notion, of the projections of the challenges of the future (of the notion) of multifunctionality, of multifunctionality for the purpose of beauty and of different social aspects of the approach to the notion of multifunctionality of agriculture. The last part of the paper is a short review of the approach to the problem in Serbia with some dilemmas presented and questions asked.

Key words: multifunctionality, notion, future, beauty, environment, agriculture

Introduction

Description of the term multifunctionality from the sociological-rural aspect is one of the tasks of the European FP6 project assigned to the *Multiagri team* currently comprised of rural sociologists from 15 EU countries. (See: <http://www.multiagri-team/>). The creation of a theoretical-conceptual or analytical framework underlies the interpretation of the description of the term multifunctionality and basic motivation is in the effort of defining and pointing out the importance of multifunctionality. The basic interpretation of multifu-

nctionality is then focused on sustainable development and protection of the environment due to a “weak connection” with the importance of agricultural production. The basic motivation of interpretation of the focus of sustainable development and protection of the environment is emphasis upon multifunctionality issues regarding sustainable development. There are six more interpretations which are however covered by the subject matter of economic, agro-economic and legal, legal-political sciences. (Bogdanov, Djordjevic-Milosevic, 2005). With the scope and extent of the issue in mind, we shall in this paper concentrate on describing and contemplating only the basic notion of the European model of agriculture, the notion of multifunctionality. Other terms of multifunctionality as well as the concept of sustainable development will be discussed on some other occasion – within the context of our broader theoretical conceptual approach to defining the future of multifunctional agriculture and its relations to sustainability. This approach is theoretically and practically justifiable, due to (still) high heterogeneity and inconsistency of theoretical approaches in defining the basal notion of the European concept of agriculture which is actually applied but which is still under construction and which needs to be further investigated and “reflected upon” in order to gain appropriate theoretical and practical operationalisation.

Irrespective of the fact that the European orientation to the concept of multifunctional agriculture is most frequently referred to as an endeavour to provide conditions through negotiations with WTO (World Trade Organisation) opponents for continual subsidisation of agricultural production and through the valorisation of *non-productive externalities*, we simply wish, with this in mind, to express an assurance that multifunctional agriculture is much more than this – both in sociological and in psychological-mentality, philosophical-environmental terms. In the notion, practice and concept of multifunctional agriculture we search for deeper environmental-ethical and humane sense, values and purposes, which are in terms of civilisation justifiable and suitable to the attained scientific, information-technological level of development of the “European knowledge society”. Therefore we perceive the concept with positive convictions that are worth pursuing. Some of the problems, primarily those regarding understanding and acceptance of the concept of multifunctional agriculture in Serbia will be dealt with in the last part of this paper.

Our intention is not to provide answers in this paper to all issues of causalities, aims, purposes and the future of the notion of multifunctionality. We would rather like to point out certain more important issues with respect to the sociological approach to defining the notion of multifunctionality (and as an alternative) important for agricultural transformation and future trends, in order to detect (point out) some heuristic potentials of the notion as well, particularly bearing in mind that reality changes very fast today – faster than new concepts, theories and methodologies capable of investigating and interpreting it are being created.

On Notions

Science is not only considered an investigation and a debate on phenomena, occurrences, processes, specific relations and methods aimed at getting at the truth on the subject matter of investigation (a segment of reality) and attaining personal, scientific and social goals. Discussion on notions is also referred to as science. A notion is more comprehensive than a word designating it. A notion has an individual, scientific, philosophical meaning, and sometimes a traditional, agreed or a “directed”, an imperative one. Paul Valéry was the first to underline that words mean what we would like them to mean only in EXCEPTIONAL cases. The exceptionality of meaning, the poverty of our language and wealth of our thoughts, often cause misunderstandings and a lack of understanding. This is why the notion of multifunctionality should be determined, but not as *a priori* providing its definition, but rather as defining it. Defining is better. Definition is always static. Defining is a process. Defining has all elements of definition, but it also includes aspects of variable images of the surrounding world and variable images of man, processuality, developmentality. Mistakes are more difficult to make here. Corrections can be made “on the way”. And, why not mention that it is a good umbrella for the potential rain of malicious criticism.

Notions always imply will and doubt; theory and practice; polysemy and multifunctionality; the past, the present and the future – desirable developmentality and sustainability. Everyday use of a notion as a word is one thing, and the spectrum of its axiology is another. Notions, still, should explain, guide and orient towards the truth, they should be conceived. But, what is the truth? How many truths are there today: one, two, six billion? Can we find the truth with an individual, in an institution, in an organisation? Can we discover the truth at all, the truth of the notion of multifunctionality and practical activity “covered” by the connotation of the notion? We shall say: according to the reached level of development of sciences, philosophy, our scientific perception and spiritual imagination, in a relatively satisfactory, but ever contemporary way, we can understand and practically operationalise the notion of multifunctionality for our modern scientific and social goals and purposes. A general standard should involve individual benefit and pleasure – and general social benefit. This would be accepted as either a utilitarian or a deontological standpoint. As regards the One Europe concept founded on the industry of knowledge (Milacic, R. V. 2006) and on agrarian, cultural, ethnic and other diversities, an optimal solution at least in this phase can be likely found in a deontological-utilitaristic “mixture”. Will the notion be abused and turned into a demagogy, an ideology or a classical abuse depends both on moral responsibility and awareness of scientists and on concrete socially and politically dominant holders of power and their interests.

Notions can thrill us with the depth of intellectual breakthrough but can also deceive us. They most commonly “leap” our imaginary and real intellectual boundaries and limitations, entering other fields, other areas. And this is good. When manipulated by verbal manipulation experts, notions become Scylla and Charybdis of our thinking, our knowledge, our practice. Hopefully, great manipulators of notions are not discussing now the notion of multifunctional agriculture.

On The Notion of the Future

Everything has its future – man, nature and time as an abstract creation and space as an empirical fact.

Nothing was simple in the *past*. The simplicity of the past is only an appearance because of our imagination of “good old” times waiting to be researched and contemplated. It looks to each generation as if its *modern* times are the most difficult ones and the most abundant with changes. Nothing will be simple in the *future* either. By modelling the potentials of the remembered *past* and of our *present* we, in fact, determine our *future*.

The past is no longer with us. It has always had its power of conviction and moral teaching. But, based on the moral teachings of the past, we must all head jointly toward the future which is our common hope, responsibility, guiding thought, and even a concern. We cannot decide on the past, but we can on the future. The past is (as it were) the field of what is known and what has become known. The future is the field of the unknown, the projected, but still unrealised.

The future must always be our relatively “new” beginning, and not the end! It must be better than the past. The future is not guaranteed to anyone. It has always been uncertain. Only for the one with one’s own (our – common), and variable image of the world is the future an option.

The centre of future multifunctionality must be man and man’s human nature.

Multifunctional agriculture is a pluridisciplinary reality the future of which can (and should) be marked out only by the freshness of great knowledge, activation of science and intelligence, and abstract thinking. The majority hit the target sometimes. Talents hit the target without fail. Geniuses also hit the target without fail – but the one even talents cannot see, yet. Therefore, when it comes to projecting the future of multifunctionality, we must rely on those who hit the target (which is visible and still invisible to many) without fail. And also on our youth, because youth is the future of multifunctional agriculture. It is because of them that they need to realise the necessity of “being better than we are”. (Peccei, 1987). The youth will live our future longer than us. That is why we must design it with them.

Through multifunctionality, the future will have to bring us closer together through solidary interdependence and dynamic cooperation, dialogue, the original European model of synergic development adapted to specific needs of each European nation and all nations altogether. Even if we are to choose between rapid and harmless multifunctional technology in multifunctional agriculture, we shall always opt for the use and improvement of the harmless technology which will in its specific way “contribute to a reduction of human sufferings” (Major, 1991) throughout Europe.

Respect for pluralism of cultures and cultural identity (respect for language, national, religious and other differences and qualities, respect for specific needs) is a condition without which the notion and concept of multifunctionality cannot be understood. Respect for human rights of the *homo ruralis* on European level – this is one of the pillars of the future of European multifunctionality. International solidarity for the welfare of mankind and each society – this is another pillar of the multifunctional future of the *homo ruralis*

and the *homo urbis*. To seek for solutions in a democratic atmosphere – it is a real demand of the multifunctional future – because we can enter the new phase of the development of democratic European society only by democratic methods and permanent democratisation.

Our proposal is to respect natural rights of nature to survival and the future. Nature is a “firm” which has managed its affairs for billions of years and has not “become bankrupt”. In societies of calculus and *a priori* usefulness and benefits (here and now, expressed in cash if possible), it is quite common for a firm to (even) become bankrupt. Can we forget that we are “a product of nature”? Can we allow nature to “bankrupt” so that we could definitely shape it into our mental and social pattern characteristic for an industrial society: We mustn’t. Not at all.

When trying to define the future of multifunctional agriculture, with respect to defining and intellectual observation, from a technical technological point of view, we cannot rely much on the past, except maybe in the so-called *organic agriculture*. In this respect, we cannot learn much from the past. But, from the viewpoint of the wisdom of living and wisdom of labour, sublime ancient morality and the ethics of evaluating man’s attitude towards other people and towards nature, our new way of living, new lifestyle, quality of life, the history of our knowledge can and should be one of teachers of life to us. This then means in our so-called “practical life” to study and rely on experienced and spiritually (intellectually) infallibly verified experiences of previous generations cherished in the so-called folk wisdom of life and work in nature and with nature. In our so-called “theoretical life”, this must be considered as a return to ancient wisdom, return to mystically enchanting Plato and great, but rational Aristotle, our immortal teachers and paragons. No matter how lovable, beautiful, righteous and rational they are – contemplation and practical verification will be the most difficult.

When contemplating the notion of multifunctionality and its future, a maxim “think globally – act locally” has again proved to be good. More so, as written by Vuk Stefanovic-Karadzic, “if everybody would do what they are capable of”.

Will the future of multifunctionality be brighter or darker? Will multifunctional agriculture be a lady with computer intelligence, with the soul and wisdom of ancient Greek philosophers and with folk wisdom? Shall we be in the multifunctional future more righteous and responsible toward ourselves and our genius, our body and soul; toward nature as a biological community and condition for our life and survival; toward social, local, family communities? These are some of the questions of our *wishes*, our *love*, our *faith*. We want brighter future of multifunctionality. We want multifunctional agriculture to incorporate adventurous technologies and ancient wisdom. We believe in the responsibility of man. Time and our experience, still, in these things, will act as a supreme judge.

Multifunctionality for the Purpose of Beauty

Our Europe is a beautiful continent. Its nature is beautiful. It must stay beautiful in the future. Multifunctional agriculture must exist for the purpose of beauty perceived not only in terms of the beauty of the “environs”, but also in terms of respect for a higher cosmic order of natural complexity. In terms of Plato’s six

degrees of beauty (beautiful body, artistic beauty, spiritual beauty, beauty of great deeds and customs, beauty of sciences, beauty of love for wisdom). Rural sociology is one of the most developed sociological disciplines. In its unrestrainable advance and development it must, over and over again, return to its source – philosophy (and ethics). This is an imperative of information society, of the European concept of multifunctional agriculture, of the farmer – the creator of the future, virtual farmer (Van der Ploeg, 2003) whose most dominant humane characteristic will have to be highly ethical awareness and conduct. As picturesquely and visionarily observed by Laura Nash, “the future of capitalism depends on the conscious reflection of a complex network of ethical values”. (Nes, 2001). This is not only a basic demand of agriculture of the future (which has already started) based on adventurous technologies, but also a civilisation demand for the realisation of which the very adventurous technologies have created a key precondition, i.e. the increasing release of farmers from hard physical labour.

Europe is an old lady. Europe must also be a girl. We must integrate the wisdom of an old lady with the beauty and optimism of a girl. It is not late, yet.

Ten thousand years have passed since agricultural revolution. During the time (and before that) man lived and worked in conformity with nature obeying (and striving to understand) its laws. Nature was *nature naturalism* (natural nature). Man submitted to its laws. Man and nature were one. And One. And then, throughout the period of almost three hundred years, man became overbearing, wishing to subjugate natural laws to his will, his way of thinking, his social institutions, His Majesty the Profit, growth at any cost and to merciless overuse of nature and master them (*Temporal mores!*). Will he become its master? Certainly not. Will the response of nature be destructive, beyond the assumption of the most imaginative geniuses? Maybe. It still depends on us – not on nature.

Since we regard science for the purpose of profit as the biggest culprit, the ethicality of science and moral responsibility of scientists should be, therefore, particularly pronounced. This is why we with special pleasure welcome the commitment of intellectuals and statesmen of Europe (not only of scientists and politicians) to multifunctional agriculture as a concept and paradigm of further development of agriculture, rural development and of man throughout our Europe. We must say: it seems that the concept of multifunctional agriculture is the most suitable concept of the attained level of development of the “European society” (the society of knowledge and communal spirit) in the period of transition of Europe to a single (our) Europe. We hope that after the period of transition to One Europe the entire multidimensionality and complexity of the concept of multifunctional agriculture would be covered by a new, succinct, but a comprehensive notion we propose. Simply: *the European concept of agriculture*, because it is logically and cognitively the most appropriate course of developmental elaboration, since multifunctional agriculture as well is only a logically and cognitively consistent elaboration (at a higher level) of *conventional, integral, sustainable and organic* agriculture. Also, the term and its essence will be the best not only for united European nations but will be, owing to its projection of the wisdom of living with nature adapted to new technologies and man’s creative and ethical possibilities, an *ideal* to other world nations as well. Ideals, as we know, cannot be imposed.

They act by the power of example. This is also, in a broader civilisation sense, an obligation of the “old lady” who owing to its great wisdom and protean power must be a model of dignified life and work of man (the creator) of the future and his work and ethical attitude towards nature surrounding him. It is worth trying for. Therefore we underline the approach to the multifunctional concept not only from the standpoint of goals – which are always quantitative ones, but also, above all, from the standpoint of purposes – which are always qualitative, meaningful ones, with intensified ethical dimensions. This is why rural sociology must not be referred to as “rural accountancy” only, or it must take special care – not to lose man in “the forest of calculus”.

The leading science (also) of today physics (especially atomic physics, as well as biology, chemistry, information technology sciences ...) again seeks foundations in ancient philosophy (Penrose, Hocking, Capra etc.), in mythical and religious thinkings, in complexities of our intellect and cosmic mind. Also in imagination, intuition, personal perception. And, then, once again, amazing findings come to light and enthusiasm is experienced: it seems that ancient philosophers gave everything careful thought. The duty of other sciences also (which is our conviction and goal) is to apply the findings of physics, chemistry, biology and other so-called adventurous sciences and their methodological patterns to rural sociology as well and, naturally, to accept them, if they produce adequate results – or if they satisfy the requirements, if they can function.

In our efforts to thoroughly define multifunctional agriculture, we must apply multifunctional and interdisciplinary approaches. However:

Firstly, this is not the task of rural sociology only, but the responsibility of rural sociologists for it is great – although it is not only theirs;

Secondly, the striving should not be for an unchanging and perfect definition but for defining;

Thirdly, there is a dilemmatic possibility: a) either a team work involving scientists from other fields (and politicians, of course). This work can be undertaken this minute; b) or significantly enlarge the subject matter of rural sociology. This work can be undertaken later, in the long run.

Furthermore, rural sociology (for a more complete investigation and contemplation of its subject matter) will have to increasingly overcome retrograde and, so to say, the most dangerous tendency becoming increasingly more obvious in a current sociological orientation towards increasingly pronounced abandonment of theoretical (and philosophical) disputes. (Stojanov, 2004). By favouring and forcing empirical investigations and by simultaneous neglect of theoretical disputes, potential disputable theoretical conclusions are being avoided. The empirical without theoretical is the thing that is disputable and limited due to empiricism and concreteness – the lack of ideas. Still, the task of defining phenomena, processes and creations, in the context of defining the subject matter of rural sociology, is and will be “in the charge” of rural sociologists in the first place.

On the Notion of Agricultural Multifunctionality

Discussing the notion of multifunctionality, let us mention that the term is a compound composed of two words: *multi*, meaning more, and *functional* as a

word most frequently designating the manner of use, degree of usefulness. Still, we must ask Aristotelian questions regarding the detection of causality or causes:

- Multifunctionality for what and for whom?
- What is it composed of?
- Where from, who is the initiator?
- What for? What are the reasons (quantity) and what are the purposes (quality)?

Also, we must consider the utility, or the benefits:

- For man as a bio-psycho-social being?
- For social community and for socio-economic development?
- For nature (the harmony between natural cosmic order and sustainable development), i.e. ecology as a field of economy, as a field of environmental protection, all the way to the ecology of the spirit of time, of the mind and intellect and the ecology of interpersonal relations?

From the viewpoint of the future of the notion, we are also interested in variable images of man and a variable image of multifunctional agriculture.

The notion of multifunctionality is actually intended to cover and redefine the concept of the development and the position of agriculture in European Union states and in the states “desiring” to become their full members.

The process of rapid scientific technological growth and development, globalisation, enlargement of the European Union, new forms of competition, opening up of markets (till the open market for external competition is created!), economic integrations, but also decentralisation, privatisation, are just a few of the contextual conditions for an approach to and creation of multifunctional agriculture by new (renewed) coordination mechanisms. Still, multifunctional agriculture is only the latest (but not the last) level of the approach to agricultural issues in a new political and economic reality of enlarged European Union.

In the sixties of the last century, the *concept of conventional agriculture* oriented towards work, production and income was abandoned. Agricultural mechanisation, use of chemicals and hybridisation gave rise to the *concept of integral agriculture* focusing appropriate attention not only on work, production and income functions, but also on the environment. The *concept of sustainable agriculture* focuses not only on the two basic functions (work and income; production), but also on nature and ambience. *The organic agriculture concept* is focused not only on work and income, production and the environment, but also on health and prosperity. Nevertheless, apart from the listed relatively evident concepts of the development and approach to agricultural production, the two most pronounced conceptual extremities today may be: *rural agriculture* (partly integrated into unfinished markets) based on rural agricultural household, which is characteristically present particularly in Eastern European countries, and in our country as well, and *precise agriculture* (Trifunovic, S. 2005) - the use of adventurous information technologies in agriculture, characteristic for rich and economically developed European countries.

The concept of multifunctional agriculture as a potential “theoretical-practical” outcome of complex European agricultural reality is aimed at comprising the

existing concepts, meaning that European agriculture must retain the components of work and income; production; natural and ambient protection; the environment; health and prosperity, as well as of climate and respect for climatic changes. This includes efforts for further integration and restructuring of rural agriculture as well as of the so-called precise agriculture.

From the viewpoint of the theoretical approach to multifunctional agriculture, it includes six functions (Bogdanov, Djordjevic-Milosevic, 2005);

1. Productive function;
2. Environmental function, involving space conservation and natural environmental protection;
3. Cohesion function, promoting integration of inhabitants, horizontal equality and aiming at struggle against marginalisation of certain social groups;
4. Recreational function, of use to rural inhabitants and citizens;
5. Residential function, aimed at preserving the existing population and mobilising the neo-rural one, and
6. Cultural function, aimed at preserving cultural heritage and other properties of the rural community.

From the viewpoint of the humane approach, we would like to particularly stress:

1. The solidary function of the *homo ruralis* and rural relations in general, which is not imposed but rather socially developed and reproduced by reciprocal structures and functions.

2. The ethical function of the *homo ruralis* with respect to work, nature and other people. It is not wise to forget that the peasant was always the most moralistic in the very work, since his work always included sociability of rural collectivity, family values, rurality as a complex and specific social relationship, but also as a moral relationship toward the natural order, animals, plants, earth. And that was also part of consciousness and of the acceptance of the position and role of a human being in the natural cosmic order. Those were the so-called higher meanings and values of human work and life. In a word, the peasant did not play God – since “God never owes anybody anything”. This is yet another reason why we underline not only the “strategic investment” into consciousness, but also drawing the moral teaching from the experienced past. At least the wisdom of the experienced past does not have to be made up. As a collection of fundamental humane and ethical values, it should be adapted to modern times. And it is, surely, the most difficult thing to do.

3. The educative function of humane resources and humane capital, because only reciprocity and redistribution generate humane values such as friendship, trust, honesty, responsibility and righteousness (Sabourin, Trifunovic, 2004), and which may be observed in the management of common resources, quality of agricultural products, market distance. The education is expressed as *condition sine qua non* of the humane approach.

Multifunctional agriculture must be used to conceptually, at the European level, “search” for appropriate solutions:

- a) to different patterns of approaches to the soil, resources and their management (Vounouki, 2004) which are, in fact, the expression of the specificities of history, territory and identity of certain nations;
- b) to different forms of work organisation and household maintenance (Duggan, 2004; Sabourin et al, 2004);
- c) to different forms of social management of labour, soil and material and non-material redistribution, which actually point to evident existence of reciprocal relations;
- d) to “regulate” the asymmetry of the market *de facto* dominated by multinational companies and intermediaries;
- e) to an income difference that occurred due to differences in social support but which is actually one of major causes of differences and inequalities.

In terms of this, within the Multiagri project (2005), the question of different definitions of multifunctionality and questions of social, political, economic implications of multifunctional agriculture have been asked. (Ploeg, Van Der and Roep, 2003; Losch, 2004.). Therefore the term multifunctionality also refers to common production of goods and public properties. Still, diverse positions of agriculture in “enlarged” Europe require diverse uses of the notion of multifunctionality. The notion of multifunctionality must integrate market exchange economy and identity and reciprocity economy, since they set mutual limitations, creating tensions, complementarities, but also contradictions between economic changes and readapted reciprocal structures. (Sabourin, Trifunovic, 2004) “The multifunctionality of agriculture refers to supplying production of food and other useful *outputs* without market price (the so-called non-market functions) in the interest of which the society intervenes by subsidies”. In terms of the previous definition, agriculture can be termed multifunctional if it provides not only food production but also other benefits, such as: food safety for the population, adequate rural living conditions, environmental protection”. (Šomodj, 2006).

Serbia and Agricultural Multifunctionality

A rural household is innovative and adaptable to different situations and has a high ability for change and expression of its resistance and flexibility potentials. (Scott, 1986.)

This rural household applies *reciprocity* through economic and social structures in the forms of social (characteristically rural) management of labour, soil, natural resources, (non-)material redistribution, since it is reciprocity which can create new purposeful human values which are difficult to “measure”.

As in Europe, work in agriculture in Serbia is difficult and relatively low-paid. Social, cultural and market environment is not always favourable and identical for all regions. Risks, fears, uncertainty, are still highly present in small agricultural units – whether a rural household or small entrepreneurs. Employment chances and opportunities in secondary and tertiary sectors are decreasing primarily due to their increasingly intensive modernisation or the need for prestructuring and surplus employees. This certainly means that assistance and compensation and general social aid (with respect to global processes, open market, the agro business

effect ...) will be increasingly needed. On the other hand, without large social resources we shall have to deal with the identity crisis, change resistance, adaptation crisis and broader social crisis, particularly referring not only to work in agriculture, but also to the creation of human values.

“Serbia faces defining national ... priorities in the rural development which must be governed by generally accepted models of the broader environment, the EU in particular. One of the basic goals is certainly to stop negative demographic and economic trends and to preserve natural and cultural heritage of rural environments and ... to improve the quality of life in rural environments”. (Bogdanov and Đorđević-Milošević, 2005) “We also need a Republic Rural Development Strategy ... renewal and development of rural local communities which are (mostly) in an extremely difficult situation, (underdeveloped, poor, stricken with identity crisis and exposed to severe social polarisation), completely stripped of power”. (Malešević, 2005). “Serbia is about to face rapid resolution of numerous agrarian and rural problems in the process of satisfying STO and EU entrance requirements and harmonising with the SAR”. (Vasiljević, Ševarlić, 2005.) These are only some of illustrative (or typical) attitudes on the state of affairs in Serbia regarding multifunctionality.

Definition of the notion of multifunctionality in Serbia from a sociological aspect has started. Incomparably small but still valuable, theoretical efforts are more present in the field of agro-economics, for now. (Tematski zbornik, 2005). The causes of such a condition lie more in the lack of strategic reforms (and financial resources) towards the European concept of agricultural multifunctionality than in the lack of scientific and project capacities. Nevertheless, in order to move forward, there should be a beginning. And we are at the very beginning of the process of comprehensive defining and implementing the notion of multifunctionality and its (future) practical operationalisation. The important thing is not to remain at the beginning.

Certain Issues

At the end of this paper, we would however want to stress only certain open issues which are already considerably present today and which will be even more dealt with in the future. For example, will there be new animosities between countries (and nations), particularly referring to material support from the “European agrarian budget” during the decision-making on the support to multifunctional agriculture within the European Union? Will this mean that the objective will be “to take as much as you can” from “the common cash-box”? If this too is efficiently prevented (what consequences will follow, then?) will there be severe pressures to change the redistribution criteria? Will this induce the so-called Matthew effect (“he who has shall be given even more”!)? Will the example of former SFRY functioning become a bestseller in the European Union? Will the main goal of political dispute in the field of multifunctional agriculture be to search for paths to common funds and “take” as much as possible for oneself!? Because of differences in cultures and mentalities, historical heritage, unequal development ... the very redistribution of agrarian budget, taken broadly as the European budget, will be used as a major test for the European future. Therefore the priority issue of the future is, in fact, the issue of

awareness, the issue of an honest and intimate acceptance of common (and united) Europe. According to an ancient saying: as long as there is sufficient funds we have earned by common efforts, everybody is more or less satisfied when they are distributed. But when the unearned funds are also distributed or received, some people usually think that much is taken away from them, and little is given, while others think that they are given little – when there is much “in a pile”.

Multifunctional agriculture is, eventually, still verified through monetary expression and values. The protection of nature has been given market-political value, as well. Idleness (inactivity) – “don’t touch” nature in some parts – is also paid, has its concrete monetary expression.

Responsibility, labour exchange among farmers, ethical work functions – to taking pride in food production – cannot be verified in the money-market. These are purposes, not goals. Will purposes also become goals?

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PRILOG PROMIŠLJANJU POJMA MULTIFUNKCIONALNOST POLJOPRIVREDE

- originalni naučni rad -

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Rezime

U ovom radu mi smo u izvesnoj meri "prekoračili" granice ruralne sociologije nastojeći na dubljem promišljanju problema pojmovnog određenja multifunkcionalnosti sa jednog šireg teorijsko - metodološkog (i filozofskog) stanovišta, a u nameri da damo originalni doprinos potpunijem razumevanju i saznavanju pojma. Pojam multifunkcionalnosti predstavlja bazični pojam evropskog koncepta poljoprivrede i veliki izazov za ruralnu sociologiju. Još uvek su prisutne kontroverze i nesaglasnosti oko njegovog definisanja kao nužnog preduslova za praktičnu operacionalizaciju i donošenje odluka. U ovom radu nastojali smo na istraživanju pojma multifunkcionalnosti, ali ipak više na promišljanju i iznalaženju "dubljih" značenja i heurističkih potencijala pojma multifunkcionalnosti. Zbog toga smo se opredelili za definisanje, a ne za definiciju. Mi smo učinili kratki osvrt na aksiološko – metodološku problematiku pojma, na projekciju izazova budućnosti (pojma) multifunkcionalnosti, na multifunkcionalnost u funkciji lepote i na različite društvene aspekte pristupa pojmu multifunkcionalnosti poljoprivrede. U zadnjem delu rada učinili smo kratak osvrt na pristup problemu u Srbiji izlažući i neke nedoumice odnosno pitanja.