



Social Responsibility in Pollution: The Case of the Tisza River

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ABSTRACT Hans Jonas claims that modern technology, which was previously considered neutral, proves to be prenicious for both the communities and the individuals on the long run, and so it can be considered bad. On January 31st, 2000 the dam of an open cyanide retention pond used by the Austrailian-Romanian mining corporation Aurul broke in Baia Mare, in the north-western part of Romania, close to the Hungarian border. A huge quantity of cyanide polluted water made its way into the stream of Zazar, the Szamos and Tisza rivers into the Danube. During its four week journey, the 150 km long toxic tide travelled a distance of 1950 km, flowin through Romania, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and on into the Black Sea, devastating 1000 km of river ecosystems. According to the damag assessments, 1240 tons of fish were killed. Fishermen on the Tisza were left unemployed as a consequence of this disaster. Tourism decreased considerably. All in all, Hungary has suffered - according to its own figures - a damage of \$107 million (29.37 billion HUF) as a consequence of the cyanide pollution. The pollution at Baia Mare is a typical event of the global world. Behind this defective social-economic practice there are far-reaching causes. In this lecture I deal with some of them: the responsibility of (i) the foreign investment, (ii) the creditor banks, (iii) the receiving state, (iv) the mediators and compradors, (v) the industrial system of values and (vi) the neo-liberal thinking,

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